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THACKERAY

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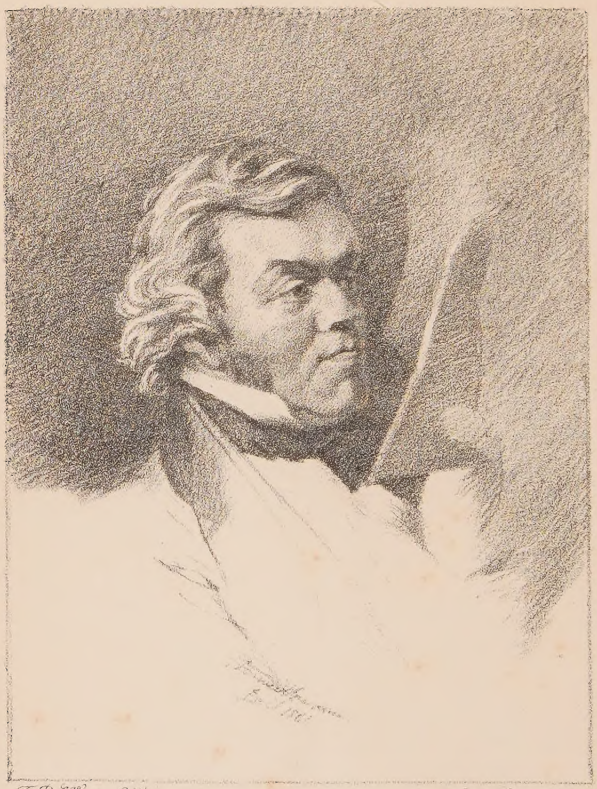

T. R. Way Lith. after Lawrence

W. M. Thackeray.

MASTERS OF LITERATURE

THACKERAY

EDITED BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

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INTRODUCTION

THACKERAY was a great traveller all his life; and his travels began early; for he was born in Calcutta on 18th July, 1811, and was sent, while a mere child, to England. In his infancy he saw Napoleon, as in his early manhood he saw Goethe; a certain vague cosmopolitan quality was always mixed with his experience; and it was his favourite boast that he had seen men and cities, like Ulysses. His blood and temper, however, were as English as they could well be; he inherited the huge stature and hearty love of eating and drinking of a line of Yorkshire yeomen. On his arrival in England he was finally committed by his relatives to the Charterhouse School, where he made many warm and lifelong friends, one of whom broke his nose. It is well known that Thackeray expressed a strong wish that no biography of him should be written. Yet it may be said in a sense that he broke his own rule and wrote his own biography. The biography is strewn and scattered indeed through the pages of his novels; but he is of all novelists the most autobiographical. He is the novelist of memory, that is, of the emotion of experience. And the truth about his schooldays and all his other days can be sought much more successfully in *The Newcomes* or *The Roundabout Papers* than in any such summary as this. In his later and looser writing especially, his allusions to his old school thicken like gathering shadows; it seems almost as if he would have liked to die within the school, like Colonel Newcome. As it is with his boyhood so with his youth. Internal evidence indicates that there was a girl who broke his heart as there was a

boy who broke his nose; and that he survived both inflictions with cheerfulness. "That malady," he said, "is never fatal to a sound organ."

He passed to Cambridge, which is also better described in his books than it can or need be described here. It is sufficient to say that, to a very recognizable extent, Pendennis of Boniface is really Thackeray of Trinity. He travelled; he saw Goethe as he had seen Napoleon—without being much the wiser. But he did, in his own favourite quotation, see men and cities; he did learn, like his favourite Fitzboodle "to order a dinner in every language in Europe"; and he did pass through one experience which was to him ever afterwards a fountain of furious satire. He sat down to play cards with some rich friends; he got up having lost some fifteen hundred pounds, and having made the acquaintance of the Hon. Algernon Deuceace.

He returned with a resolution to work his own way and was admitted to the Bar; in the intervals of that leisurely career he wrote articles and drew caricatures. It was as a draughtsman that he took himself most seriously. There is a legend that he actually waited upon Dickens with a proposal to illustrate his books, then already in the blaze of popularity. Dickens, presumably, declined; which was a good thing for Dickens's books, but also a good thing for Thackeray's. Although the interview was futile it affects the imagination as much as the meeting with Napoleon. Thackeray's first formidable appearance in letters was in *Fraser's Magazine*; where he made his name—or rather made his pseudonym. Over the signature of "Michael Angelo Titmarsh" (with occasional holidays of a more vulgar sort under that of James Yellowplush) he began to pour out his experiences, which were already somewhat motley and even squalid. This must always be remembered in the silly discussion about whether Thackeray was a cynic. The false impression was given, not because he made his heroes less than his villains, but because he certainly wrote about villains before he wrote about heroes. Madame D'Ivry and Captain Blackball, Mrs.

Mackenzie and Mr. Moss, can be found in his earliest and crudest sketches. It is exactly Ethel Newcome and the Colonel who do not come in till afterwards. Something of this healing and humanizing may have been effected by his marriage; though its ultimate issue was, as everyone knows, painful and terrible. Mrs. Thackeray was sent to an asylum; and Thackeray said a very fine thing: "I would do it over again."

The first two books with which his name is still universally connected were *The Book of Snobs* and *Vanity Fair*. The first was a work much needed and very admirably done. The solemn philosophic framework the idea of treating caddishness as a science was original and sound; for snobbishness is indeed a disease in our society, requiring a large and responsible analysis. His definition of snobbishness is good—a mean admiration. It is good, that is, as a philosophical formula for the vice in all ages and countries; it does little towards explaining its peculiar predominance in modern England. And this was indeed a thing that Thackeray could hardly be expected to explain. The true source of snobs in England was the refusal to take one side or the other heartily in the crisis of the French Revolution; the English attempt to have what Macaulay called (with unconscious but awful irony) "the most popular aristocracy and the most aristocratic people in the world." Those words would make another good definition of snobbishness. We have a popular aristocracy; it consists chiefly of brewers. We have an aristocratic people; that is, it consists chiefly of snobs. If we had made our system sincere, if we had conformed to either of the two great models of government we might have had the vices involved in them, but we should have been free from this fever of worldliness, this vulgar unrest. Aristocracy does not have snobs any more than democracy. But we have neither securely closed our house nor boldly opened it. We have merely let it be whispered that a window is unbarred at the back; and a few burglars break in and are made peers. But the thought of that possible entrance rides all men's fancy like some infernal love

affair; and enfevers and exhausts England. All this Thackeray was too restrained and too early-Victorian to see. But it is remarkable that the mere subject stung him into an unusual pugnacity and even snappishness. George IV in his robes, he says, can be seen for a shilling, "children and flunkeys sixpence. Go, and pay sixpence."

The mere title of *Vanity Fair* was certainly an inspiration; for it is both the strength and weakness of the book that it produces on the mind (I might say even on the *nerves*) the same impression of mixed voices and almost maddening competition as a crowded square on market day. The force and fault of Thackeray was always to be irrelevant; but here irrelevancy rises till it reaches to a sort of deafening distraction. Elsewhere in Thackeray digression was destined to be slow; but here even digression is swift, swift as the dance of death at the balls of Lord Steyne or the swoop of all the vultures to the sick bed of Miss Crawley. Everyone in this tale is filled with a futile energy. The reader is purposely left wondering at so much courage in that craven battle, so much endurance in that strange and selfish martyrdom. Newman said once, I believe, "Evil always fails by overleaping its aim and good by falling short of it." Whether true or not this might almost be a motto for *Vanity Fair*. Here Thackeray is right in calling himself so constantly a moralist. He is genuinely a moralist in this essential sense that he insists that actions shall be judged not by their energy, but by their aim.

Many strenuous critics have sneered at the softness of Amelia Sedley and openly exalted Rebecca along lines of the will to live. It would be hard to persuade modern critics that Thackeray may be deeper or even more daring than they are. But I hardly think that they see Thackeray's point. His point surely is that Amelia was a fool; but that there is a certain sanative and antiseptic element in virtue, by which even a fool manages to live longer than a knave. For after all when Amelia and Becky meet at the end, Amelia has much less energy, but she has much more life. She is *younger*; she has not

lost her power of happiness; her stalk is not broken. She could really, to use Thackeray's own metaphor, grow green again. But the energy of Becky is the energy of a dead woman: it is like the rhythmic kicking of some bisected insect. The life of the wicked works outwards and goes to waste. The life of the innocent, even the stupidly innocent, is within; if anyone dislikes the battered sentiment of the word "love," I will say that innocence has more *zest*, more power of tasting things. Hence Thackeray's thought is really suggestive; that perhaps even softness is a sort of superiority; it is better to be open to all emotions as they come than to reach the hell of Rebecca; the hell of having all outward forces open, but all receptive organs closed. For the very definition of hell must be energy without joy.

It was very specially in connection with *Vanity Fair* that the great accusation of "cynicism" broke about Thackeray's ears. The argument is a mere logomachy, the trick of taking a vague word and then asking if it applies precisely. If cynicism means a war on comfort, then Thackeray, to his eternal honour, was a cynic. If it means a war on virtue, then Thackeray, to his eternal honour, was the reverse of a cynic. It is absurd, in this sense, to call a man cynical whose whole object it is to show that goodness, even when it is silly, is a healthier thing than wickedness when it is sensible. The truth in the accusation is probably this; that his vile characters are drawn a little more vividly than his virtuous characters. So, in the small artistic sense, Dante is more successful with hell than with the beatific vision. Virtuous characters are always drawn less vividly than other characters: because they are so much more worth drawing.

The next important work was the novel of *Pendennis*. Thackeray had called *Vanity Fair* a novel without a hero. He might almost have called *Pendennis* a novel with nothing else but a hero; only that the hero is not very heroic. Nevertheless the chief character in the tale fulfils some of the most important conditions of the old heroic types of literature. *Pendennis* is an epic. It is an

epic in this essential sense that its hero is not merely a man, but is also Man. He is, as the old mystical tragedian of the Middle Ages would have put it, Everyman. Just as the wanderings of Ulysses are the wanderings of Man, just as Dante in heaven or hell is man in heaven or hell, so Arthur Pendennis is deliberately meant to be something more than a character, he is a type and a symbol. Nowhere else, I think, has Thackeray this epic breadth. The love of Clive for Ethel is the love of Clive for Ethel; the love of Dobbin for Amelia is the love of Dobbin for Amelia. But the love of Arthur Pendennis for Miss Fotheringay is First Love; it is separated from all justifications or consequences; it is the veritable divine disease which seems a part of the very health of youth. Clive Newcome's failure to be a painter is a mere professional failure to paint. Colonel Newcome's ruin in his banking business is only one financial collapse. But Arthur Pendennis being plucked at Oxbridge is the recurring ruin of the pride of youth, the eternal prodigal among the eternal swine. One result of this centralism in the subject is actually a slight increase in the comic accentuation of the other characters. *Pendennis* contains far more farce than the other serious novels; the irrelevant introduction of the impossible Mr. Archer, for instance, is much more like a page of Dickens. Nor is this combination paradoxical. When the mediaeval dramatist summed up the normal in Everyman all the forces outside him had to be made abnormal, had to be unmistakable and even monstrous. Death had to be very bony; Good Deeds had to be very ill. So the other *Pendennis* characters have to be obvious and aggressive shapes because they are allegorical influences on the soul of Pendennis. It would be an exaggeration to say that Major Pendennis is the devil, while Warrington is the angel. But there is just this truth in it; that we think of them both as influencing Pendennis. Yet it never crosses our mind to think of them influencing each other. We may therefore say with truth that *Pendennis* is an epic, because it celebrates the universal man. But it is also a mediaeval, and even a late medi-

aeval epic: because it celebrates not the strength of man but his weakness.

In the character of Major Pendennis of course Thackeray did splendidly a work which wanted doing. It is in a subtle way more effective than the whole of the *Book of Snobs*; for it vividly presents, in the person of a not unsuitable man, the fundamental truth that the worship of this world is a superstition, and has all the limitations of a superstition. Religious people speak of worldlings as gay and careless; but such religious people pay the worldlings far too high a compliment. Major Pendennis was not particularly gay; and he certainly was the very reverse of careless. He had to walk more cautiously and seriously than the adherent of any elaborate theology. Worldliness and the worldlings are in their nature solemn and timid. If you want carelessness you must go to the martyrs.

Thackeray's position as an author was now sufficiently established, and within close distance of each other appeared *The Newcomes* and *Esmond*. The public has largely forgotten all the Newcomes except one, the Colonel, who has taken his place with Don Quixote, Sir Roger de Coverley, Uncle Toby, and Mr. Pickwick, in that great catalogue of great attempts to capture and describe the almost eerie fascination of simplicity. But all the rest of the Newcomes are good and worth remembering—Hobson Newcome with the straw in his mouth and the hands in his pockets, and the truly masculine decision to mind his own business and let his wife mind everything else; Lady Anne Newcome, a fool with one infallible feeler or sense left in her, the power of knowing a gentleman, with which she salutes the Colonel; Barnes Newcome, the neat and nasty young man from the City, who is safe and successful enough to conquer the world, and has a soul like a small dried pea: above all Ethel Newcome, who is really a vision, who walks the world like a Diana.

It is true, as is remarked elsewhere, that Thackeray suffered, like other good writers, from repeating himself. But sometimes, when he was specially careless or

fatigued, it was not even himself that he repeated. It was somebody else, somebody much more commonplace and clumsy, but also (oddly enough) some one much more given to mere caricature. Dickens was extravagant when he was feeling extravagant, when his animal spirits broke beyond all reason and belief; but Thackeray is only occasionally extravagant when he is feeling dull. A case of what I mean can be taken from *The Newcomes*. Barnes Newcome, at the beginning of the story, when he is young, and Thackeray's interest in him is young also, is a living personality leaping with life; leaping decorously of course, in his little lacquered boots, but definitely and utterly undeniable. The young fashionable business man, who talks with a drawl when he is discussing levities, but drops his voice to a quieter and simpler note when he is talking business, and speaks "quite good-naturedly, unaffectedly, and selfishly," is a man we all know we have met, or else (what is far more impressive in fiction) whom we all know we shall meet. But as the story goes on the smooth and slippery Barnes slips out of the fingers of the writer and the reader; in middle age he is not convincing; he becomes more and more a conventional villain. I believe, for instance, that Barnes Newcome did call Lord Kew "my dear fellow" while abusing Kew's particular friend; I believe he did offer one finger to Pendennis; I believe he did call Clive "young pot-house," and ask whether the Colonel "had given him any Brahminical cousins." All those shots are in the bull's eye. I do believe that all men thought Barnes detestable, but that some women thought him witty. But my belief in him fails after the first volume. I do not believe that he lectured at Newcome on "Mrs. Hemans and the Poetry of the Domestic Affections." I do not even believe that he beat his wife, though I am sure that he gave her quite sufficient reason for beating him. Saving the grace of God, a dull, lifeless little cynic he would have remained to the end, and such men never put themselves absurdly in the wrong either by a parade of piety or an orgy of violence. But

the truth is that Thackeray grew tired of him, and being tired he became conventionally exaggerative and melodramatic. Being weary he began to sprawl.

But in *Esmond* there is none of this sprawling. It is the one work of Thackeray which is, in the somewhat artificial modern sense, a work of art. It is marvellous that a man so apparently casual and conversational as Thackeray should have written so many thousand words and so thick a book without once using a word that might not have been used at the court of Queen Anne. Realism is generally associated with the painful, and romance with the pleasurable. But indeed, though this is the most romantic of Thackeray's tales, it is much the saddest. The most dreadful and blood-chilling thing in this world is a tired kindness. And Colonel Esmond is the type of that weary and tasteless magnanimity; his large dark eyes darken the universe; I am sure that Lord Bolingbroke had converted him to irreligion. The tale is a high and chaste tragedy, which one reads through once with reverence and austere profit, as one reads *Macbeth* or *The Master of Ballantrae*. But I never feel that I can return to the coffee-house with Steele and Addison as I return again and again to the "Cave of Harmony" with Warrington and Bayham and Pen. They are all alive and my friends for ever. But over the great Queen Anne romance there broods a peculiar conviction that Queen Anne is dead.

Esmond and *The Newcomes* mark the turning-point of Thackeray's triumph and decline; after that his summer turned to autumn, a rich and reminiscent and strongly coloured autumn indeed, but still a distinctly autumnal one. Moreover his retrogressive habit of mind, his love of introducing old characters and old themes again and again, emphasized any weakening in his grip; because it made it easy to compare the later work with the earlier. *The Virginians* offers itself as a sequel to *Esmond*; and as such one can only call it an inadequate sequel. In the same way *Philip* is written in the style of *The Newcomes*, only in such a different style. It goes without saying that there are wonderful things in both

books. In comedy Thackeray never struck a smarter note than when in *The Virginians* he created the terrible little Yankee Countess of Castlewood, who says with such a sweet smile to the savage old aunt, "now the Baroness and I are going to have such a nice talk"; or when in *Philip* he created the wretched Talbot Twysden, swaggering about clubs and saying "No longer a hunting man myself. Lost my nerve, by George." And in tragedy Thackeray never struck a more deep or more resounding note than that which salutes poor spiteful Mrs. Baynes, sitting as a sentinel outside the sick room of her alienated husband, or which notes with ironic vengeance the last dissolution of Beatrix Esmond.

But in spite of these fine things it remains the fact that one cannot read through either *The Virginians* or *Philip* with the old *elan* which carried one through *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis*. To the last two novels published, one finished and the other unfinished, the same general criticism applies. *Lovell the Widower* is a very clever sketch if we consider it in the light of one of his earlier and somewhat less humane sketches; but as a novel it seems too long drawn out, especially as there is nobody in the story with whom the reader can have any generous and warlike sympathy. *Denis Duval*, which Thackeray left unfinished, as Dickens left *Edwin Drood*, is a pleasant return to his more romantic manner, and contains some charming descriptions of the places and people about Pevensey Level, and in the old stranded towns of Winchelsea and Rye. But beyond giving us a certain satisfying sentiment that the great writer died in charity and at peace with primary things, the first chapters of *Denis Duval* tell us little either about itself or its author. That he did die thus, in the gentlest phase of his spirit, numberless evidences in his other essays and in the knowledge of all his friends attest. There are moments in the last days of this cynic when we have almost to pardon his pointless and flowing piety as we should pardon it in saints or innocent children. He does indeed become formless; but he fades into the light.

The last important act of his life was his acceptance of the editorship of the *Cornhill Magazine*, in the immediate success of which he took a pleasure at once witty and childlike, which makes very pleasant reading in the *Roundabout Papers*. In one of the most amusing of these, called *On Some Late Great Victories*, he compares himself to a pagan conqueror driving in his chariot up the Hill of Coru, with a slave behind him to remind him that he is only mortal. "In ancient times, Pliny (*apud* Smith) relates, it was the custom of the Imperator 'to paint his whole body a bright red'; and also, on ascending the Hill, to have some of the hostile chiefs led aside 'to the adjoining prison, and put to death.' We propose to dispense with both these ceremonies." In 1861 he built a large and quiet house in Kensington, in that Queen Anne style round which so much of his historic fancy had hovered; and there, in 1863, after little more than a hint of illness, he died quietly and suddenly.

There is no writer, certainly no writer of so high a rank, from whom it is more difficult to make extracts than Thackeray. A book by Dickens is like a sublime scrap-book; the pictures are separate, yet tell their own tale like the pictures on a nursery screen or a child's toy book. If nothing remained of Pickwick except the Sawyer supper party, all the characters would be complete and clear, and it would be impossible to guess that Jack Hopkins came in only for that scene while Bob Sawyer ran through the whole book. Both would be comic characters clearly depicted. By a sort of extravagant lucidity, by a grotesque symbolism almost like that of heraldry, Dickens stamped and branded on the brain in a few words all that it was essential to say about anybody. But Thackeray worked entirely by diffuseness; by a thousand touches scattered through a thousand pages. It is a method admirably suited to his particular purpose; that of half-ironically worming himself into the centre of a subject; politely insinuating himself into the secrets of everybody before he begins to treat them satirically. Brevity may be the soul of wit; but it would be quite as true to say in such cases

that lengthiness is the soul of satire. To batter the worldly castle with the artillery of open derision, as Dickens did, is a much swifter task than to blow it up from within with one carefully constructed bomb of irony. This was indeed one of the essentials of Thackeray's power and position; he was attacking Vanity Fair from the inside, and must have been at least sufficiently polite to get inside it. Some might even have said that he was betraying his class; there is no doubt at least that he was betraying himself. That noble title, *The Book of Snobs*, would not have been so effective if he had not been able to add "By one of Themselves." By the very nature of his satire it had to be a slow satire. He could exhibit a stir of anger at the luxury of the rich. But he could not pretend to exhibit a start of surprise at it, as Dickens could. He could not speak of ladies and gentlemen as monsters whom he had just met on his travels; that was the great speciality of Dickens. He has awakened to the evil of his world; but it is essential to his method that he should have awakened slowly; therefore it is natural that the method of satiric revelation should be also slow. Even the bodily description of his characters is scattered and disseminated. The Dickens method is to say: "Lord Jones, a tall man with a hook nose and a white pointed beard, entered the room." Thackeray's method is to say, in Chapter I: "Lord Jones, being very tall, had just knocked his head against the chandelier, and was in no very agreeable temper"; in Chapter VII.: "What jokes Jemima made about Sir Henry's bald head, Lord Jones's hooked nose, and so on"; and in Chapter XXIII: "Little Mr. Frizzle, the hairdresser, had pursued Jones for years, advising his lordship to blacken artificially the white pointed beard that he wore." This method of the million small touches recurring at intervals is responsible in no small degree for the entertaining quality of Thackeray taken as a whole; but it renders almost impossible the task of separating portraits or landscapes or other coherent pictures from the text. Thackeray has one ultimate merit, or rather magic. Thackeray is *always* interesting;

even in the passages which are bad. And yet I have found it very difficult to pick out interesting passages, or even passages that are good.

It is, I think, unnecessary to urge this obvious point with any detail. There is no short and vivid description of Lord Steyne, let us say; you get his rank in one chapter, his red whiskers in another, his bald head in another, his domestic life in another. We discover point by point that Pendennis was of sturdy figure, that he walked with a slight swagger, that he had careful brown whiskers; in no place is the swaggering figure in its fine raiment allowed to step complete upon the stage. But this difficulty in finding any definite summary of a man in Thackeray is of course only symbolic of the general difficulty of treating him in clear excerpts; a difficulty which extends to the whole of his moral atmosphere and fundamental philosophy. His habit in this matter has an advantageous as well as a disadvantageous side; and unless it is fully grasped it is likely enough that the reader will misunderstand and underrate Thackeray, not only when he reads him in extracts, but when he reads him in bulk.

Many people would agree that irrelevancy is one of Thackeray's special weaknesses. Not so many perhaps have adequately realized that it is one of his special strengths. It may be perhaps that in his later years and works he did sometimes ramble and lose the thread and become merely garrulous; many other ingenious or over-ingenious men have thus touched a kind of chaos in their decay. But in the best days of Thackeray his apparent irrelevance was a very delicate and even cunning literary artifice and mode of approach. His rambling was all strategy; for it is the very triumph of strategy to look like rambling. His artlessness was precisely his art. Mr. Max Beerbohm's very true criticism of him, that he never seems to be hunting for an adjective, is yet connected with a peculiar adjectival felicity. While actually reading him one is inclined to call it not merely felicity but good luck. But that is the whole exquisite art of Thackeray at his best: to get the one

perfect word yet seem to have got it by accident. When he calls Colonel Newcome a gentleman "with a lean brown face and long black mustachios, dressed in very loose clothes," he has really picked the most pointed words for his picture as much as Stevenson did when he described Long John Silver as a big plain man with a large face like a ham. But Thackeray manages to be easy as well as vivid; to find the true thing to say as a man finds it in the course of conversation. This is the first and most important purpose served by the seeming carelessness and copiousness of Thackeray's style. In so many well-written novels we can believe in the incidents; but we cannot believe that any man is really narrating them. We can believe in the story, though it be full of pirates and spectres; but we cannot believe in the story-teller. Such things might conceivably happen; but no man in his senses would narrate them in that way. But the tales of *The Newcomes* and *Philip* really sound like tales told quietly in a club; we seem to hear the voice of Arthur Pendennis telling them; we seem almost to smell his cigar, a good one.

This is the most important of the artistic uses to which Thackeray puts the rambling method; he uses it to make us feel his sincerity by the very fact of his gossip and divergences. The story is all the more likely to be an actual story because it is always running off into other stories. But over and above this there are other important purposes for which he uses the art of artlessness, the strategy of wandering. No novelist ever carried to such perfection as Thackeray the art of saying a thing without saying it. Human life is (so to speak) so dense with delicacies, so thickly sown with things that are true and yet may be misunderstood, that this is a very valuable faculty in a man telling tales about men. It may be true to say that a man drinks too much; yet it may be exactly false to say that he drinks. A man may be hard or even exhausting to entertain; yet he may not be in any ordinary sense a fool or even a bore. It may be manifest that a woman has too much to put up with in her married life; yet it may be quite untrue to

call it an unhappy marriage. A man may just fail to be a gentleman; and yet be the very opposite of a cad. These gossamer threads of truth, which are destroyed with the very touch of tracing them, are very hard indeed to deal with in literature; and I think they were never so well dealt with as by the Thackerayan method, the method which may be defined as an allusive irrelevancy.

When Thackeray wished to hint a truth which was just not true enough to bear his whole weight, his way was to wander off into similes and allegories which repeated and yet mocked the main story like derisive and dying echoes. If Thackeray wished to say that Jones drank too much without calling Jones a drunkard, then he would go into a long dreamy parenthesis, quoting Horace, humorously invoking Bacchus, talking about Bohemia and vineyards, and so come back to Jones, without having insulted him, but having—shall we say —sobered him. If he wished to indicate that Mrs. Jones had more trouble in her married life than she had had on her honeymoon, he did not say brutally that she was a disappointed woman; which perhaps was not true. He merely touched on it and then trailed off into some epicurean song in prose about how youth must pass and roses fade, and by that avenue of universal autumn returns to Mrs. Jones, having humanely hinted at her melancholy without in the least suggesting (like a dirty modern) her despair.

I have described this style in the general, so that any Thackerayan must recognize my meaning; and not need many examples of the same thing in the particular. Such examples, however, could easily be given. Thus it was necessary to suggest that Clive Newcome had been, not a young blackguard, but something of a "young blood"; this Thackeray does by the use of a playful theatrical metaphor about having been behind the scenes. Thus again it was necessary to suggest that Dobbin did not get quite the reward of his own heroic simplicity in winning the silly little woman whom he loved; it is suggested by a fine stroke of airy philosophy, as of one changing the subject, in the final

"*Vanitas vanitatum*, which of us has his wish in this world, or, having it, is satisfied?" It was necessary to suggest that Arthur Pendennis (of whom it would have been grossly untrue to say that he was not a gentleman) was yet in a subtle manner less of a gentleman than his friend Warrington. This is indicated with just the right amount of airy emphasis by this fact, that while Warrington's unquestionable lineage is kept out of the picture altogether, the pages are full of fantastic excursions about the Prince of Fairoaks and the ancient escutcheon of Pendennis. The occasions are indeed very numerous in which Thackeray finds this knack of half-suggestion very convenient. How delicately he suggests the peculiar character of Helen Pendennis; a saint without a sense of honour. With how quiet a shade as of the coming on of twilight, does he convey the fact that Colonel Newcome's character was, after all, slightly spoilt in prosperity: suggests it less by any change in the old face with the gray moustaches than by a certain change in the faces of Clive or Laura or Ethel as they look at it. In this connection it is specially unjust to call Thackeray a cynic. He falls away into philosophizing not because his satire is merciless but because it is merciful; he wishes to soften the fall of his characters with a sense and suggestion of the weakness of all flesh. He often employs an universal cynicism because it is kinder than a personal sarcasm. He says that all men are liars, rather than say directly that Pendennis was lying. He says easily that all is vanity, so as not to say that Ethel Newcome was vain.

Of course he suffered in his later work, like most other great men, from a tendency to imitate himself. It is a remarkable fact in first-class authors that they not only write imitations of themselves; but they are generally bad imitations. They imitate their own externals and miss the point and the spirit exactly as if they were total strangers; I suppose they remember the way they had of saying things but forget what they were trying to say. Thus the parodists of Swinburne's exquisite early poetry started a stupid idea that his effects depended

entirely on alliteration. It was not in the least true; but Swinburne believed it, and began to write merely alliterative poetry. In the same way, in some of his last books Thackeray did no doubt use this rambling style without its old subtle purpose of suggestion. He did not merely leave the subject, he lost it. He did not merely get into a parenthesis, but he never got out. I will give one comparison of his two uses of the irrelevant. When Ethel Newcome is about to be married to the great Lord Farintosh, Thackeray indulges in a long and amusing apologue about how women in the East are sold to dance in the temples and how natural it seems—in the East. In his later book, *Philip*, he seems to remember the success of this passage and introduces another long figurative chapter on the selling of Eastern maidens *apropos* of the decision of Agnes Twysden to marry Captain Woolcomb. But he does not notice that there is no need for this excursus in the second case; while there was a subtle psychological need for it in the first. A certain magnanimous mystery was deliberately kept up round the motives of Ethel Newcome. The reader was really not supposed to know, at least until he reviewed the book as a whole, how far that proud head had consciously stooped to the slavery of calculation, how far it had still the bewildered pride of a princess in captivity. It was, therefore, a strictly artistic touch to remind the reader, among other things, that there are societies where such sale does not feel degrading. But about Agnes Twysden there is no mystery at all; she is simply a cold-blooded minx. There is no sort of doubt whatever that she would have married for money in any society, Eastern or Western. Thackeray has put this character down in black and white—especially black. There is, therefore, no need for that hesitating and allusive style of allegory which was quite appropriate in the riddle of the Farintosh betrothal, when Thackeray had to fling a faint and fugitive shadow upon the shining face of the noblest of Victorian heroines.

This is not, however, the only use to which Thackeray put his rambling and rollicking method. He did at least

one other thing with it; he invented a new mode of controversy. In controversies he did not indeed very often indulge; he was primarily a man of impressions rather than a man of convictions. And such convictions as he had were of the slightly humdrum Victorian sort; a vague disapproval of armed revolution, a vague approval of philanthropy. But when it happened, by some accident of his literary life that he had to defend himself against assault or avenge what he conceived to be a wrong, he showed that this seemingly loose and flying lasso of his had qualities as a weapon which made it in another way not inferior to the battle-axe of Macaulay or the steel trap of Newman. Writing in a conversational and leisurely manner, as if he had his whole life before him, he contrived really to give the impression that his opponents were preposterous people with whom his mellow experience could be patient. Controversialists like Macaulay showed an eagerness in pouncing upon errors which was, in its way, a confession that errors were few. Thackeray did not seem to pounce on errors; he seemed to fall over them, and this was much more insulting for it implied that they were many; that they were strewn about his path like pebbles on the beach. Also his indirect method had in argument an indirect and boomerang character which was sometimes startlingly effective. We expect to find the sting in the tail of an epigram; but there is something arresting about finding it in the tail of a Roundabout Paper. It is often when he seems most pointless that the reader is impaled upon the point. This is a minor aspect of Thackeray, and almost entirely neglected by his critics; because his controversies occupy a very small space in the immense bulk of his works, and because they were not commonly concerned with any great political or religious principle. But they are very characteristic of the roundabout style of realism; and for this reason I have included one example in the selections; the essay on *Thunder and Small Beer*, which he wrote in reply to a pompous *Times* review, and which is a model of easy remonstrance and affable offensiveness. The style of sentence that begins: "How

can I be like a dustman that rings for a Christmas box at your hall door? I never was there in my life," strikes a new note in the art of controversy.

I may seem to have spoken of Thackeray's work rather as if the parenthesis were the only important part of it. And this is to a certain extent true; he is one of those men (there are even more women) whose best remarks are always in brackets. So much is this so that in some of his later novels one may say that the narrative is a failure redeemed by the non-narrative passages, the typical aimless talks in clubs, the glimpses of glowing minor characters, and above all the dialogues between Pendennis and Laura, who really tell the story between them. But we have to consider not only how he used and placed the parenthesis, but the nature of the parenthesis itself. Thackeray was fond of calling himself the Preacher of Ecclesiastes or the Chorus of a Greek tragedy; and all his interludes and comments are indeed of this character; what fills up the gaps in the Thackeray story is the Thackeray view of life; and of this a word must be said. He himself spoke of it gaily as his philosophy; but it was scarcely logical and coherent enough to be a philosophy in the full sense; and indeed if you try to turn it into a formal philosophy you will find yourself bringing out as a result something entirely un-Thackerayan, something harsh and ludicrous like pessimism. But it was a spirit and a point of view; and it might be called romantic, only that the word romantic has now somewhat the sense of adventurous. And the word adventurous means rather a man who is always looking forward to adventures. But Thackeray was a man who was always looking backwards at adventures; he is the romantic of mere memory. If some think that there was too much salt about him, it was the same with Lot's wife.

The closest definition of his spirit would I think be this; that he loved all fresh and beautiful things, like other romantics; but loved them with a deliberate recollection of their eternal recurrence and decay. He loved youth; but he did not love youth because it is young.

He loved youth because it is old; one of the oldest things in the world. Human history had for him the high monotony of an everlasting song, in which every verse is beautiful, but the tune is always the same. He had the healthy sympathy of romance for love in a cottage or love scaling castle walls. But this had nothing to do with reasoned lawlessness or any theoretic trust in passion, it was a mere instinct for the tune that makes the world go round. In short he did not admire the troubadour climbing the rope ladder because he was unconventional. He admired him because he was conventional; he was doing the correct thing; he was doing what nature and human tradition expect of a troubadour. Thackeray expected the young to rebel as he expected the birds to sing. Thackeray's liberalism again had no connection with those vistas of change in human affairs which many of his contemporaries saw opening before them. He asked for rational freedom, for the ordinary human affection and opinions; he did not think that those affections and opinions were ever likely to be anything but ordinary. He believed in emancipation, but not very much in progress. His admiration for youth, the golden and exultant youth of Clive Newcome or Harry Warrington, has nothing to do with any feeling about the future, such as has inspired most descriptions of patriotic or revolutionary boyhood. Boys will be sailors, cries Mr. Rudyard Kipling, boys will found a new Empire that shall girdle the globe. Boys will be rebels, cries Ibsen, they will bring their boisterous freedom to break down the barriers that separate us from truth and free creation. For Thackeray the most important and solid prophecy about boys is that they will be boys.

This is of course the key to another quality in Thackeray, haunting and to some exasperating. I mean his perpetual reference to the remote past especially to his three favourite sages, Æsop, Horatius Flaccus and King Solomon. They were meant to stand as an enduring rebuke to those who rebelled against the vital recurrences of existence, lovers who were certain that no man had

loved before, prophets who were certain that no man would doubt afterwards. All three sages stood to cure the mere hot sickness and malady of novelty; by pointing out that even such maladies were old. Solomon bore testimony that there is nothing new under the sun —not even the sunstroke. Horace testified that there were strong men before Agamemnon—and weak men too, minor poets and mad decadents before the birth of Achilles. Æsop bears witness to a tremendous and primal tradition that the very beasts are human in many of our human vanities and vulgarities, morbidities and sophistries. Perhaps we were madmen even before we were men.

It is in consequence quite unfair to Thackeray to talk as if these classical allusions and fabulous parallels with which his work is strewn were either the mere padding of a man who had nothing to say or the mere senile loquacity of a man who could not stop saying it. They were introduced to create that very air and light of antiquity and eternal human nature in which alone he could see his characters move. If in writing of his fashionable heroine whirling round a ball room in Mayfair he always said something like *neque tu choreas sperne, puer*, it was not pedantry but a melancholy passion for reminding people how many *débutantes* had come out since the age of Horace or the end of Eden. If he always called a humbug a wolf in sheep's clothing or an ass in a lion's skin, he was not using commonplace phrases, he was seeking to remind us that there is in modern sin and folly something as fierce and primitive as a wolf, something as plain and comic as a donkey. And if he ended the first verse of his finest poem with "mataiotes mataioteton," it was not to air his Greek, nor even to rhyme to "treat on," but in order to put once more in a new tongue and see suddenly in a new aspect his everlasting refrain of *vanitas vanitatum*. I shall not allege of this characteristic any more than of the other that he never carried it to chaotic lengths or indulged it weakly for its own sake; but its original impulse is a perfectly artistic impulse, a genuine condition

of the kind of book he wishes to write. Mere pedants sneer at well-known tags or old quotations from Greek and Latin. But for Thackeray's purpose the more old a quotation was the better; and a tag well worn was only a tag well tested. It is one of the simplest and silliest of the modern mistakes to connect the word old with the word stale or the word weary. The oldest thing in the universe is its energy. It was no inconsiderable part of Thackeray's business to proclaim that the oldest thing in the world was its youth.

All this, both the intention and the style, has made the task of selection specially difficult. It is indeed really impossible to represent in extracts these peculiar and pervasive graces of Thackeray; the incessant touches of detail or the refrain-like reference to antiquity. But there are other qualities of the writer that can be represented in extract. All these generalizations tend of their own nature to over-statement. Thus it is broadly true that Dickens was great in humour, but not great in pathos. But it is by no means true that he was never good in pathos; the passages about the old man in the Fleet and the death of Mrs. Weller in *Pickwick* are quite enough to prove that. In the same way Thackeray was not primarily dramatic; but when at a certain height and heat he could be dramatic, and even (what is even jollier), melodramatic. The return of the liberated Rawdon Crawley to his insulted home is not only a strong spiritual fulfilment, but a very strong stage situation. And the first scene of the Newcomes in the Cave of Harmony, in which the Colonel flings himself delightedly into the harmless songs and then flings himself furiously out of the room at the first hint of harmful ones; this is not merely a good piece of gossip or character study; it is by far the shortest, sharpest, and most theatrical way that the Colonel's character could be summed up at his first entrance on the stage. There is a similar note of real collision and crisis in the quarrel between the younger and elder Osborne which precipitates the marriage. There is a similar note in the admirable comedy combat between Major Pendennis and

Captain Costigan (the respectable humbug and the disreputable humbug, both with the same senseless goodnature); which succeeds in averting a marriage. The extracts that follow are therefore of necessity largely confined to these few crucial passages, but I have endeavoured to balance them, not by introducing undramatic excerpts from the novels (which would have been shapeless and unworkable) but by giving a larger prominence than is usual to those Thackerayan works which were in theory undramatic—his essays and occasional papers. In one or two of the *Roundabout Papers* he really justified the roundabout method and showed that it was capable of the same sort of delicate poignancy as the style of Charles Lamb. The essay in defence of the mendacity of servants (which I quote) is really as good as Lamb and better, in so far that it suggests not so much the witty helplessness of Elia, but rather a laughing repose, and almost sleepy mirth. In all things his great spirit had the grandeur and the weakness which belonged to the England of his time, an England splendidly secure and free, and yet (perhaps for that reason) provincial and innocent. He had nothing of the doctrinal quality of the French and Germans. He was not one who made up his mind, but one who let his mind make him up. He lay naturally open to all noble influences flowing around him; but he never bestirred himself to seek those that were not flowing or that flowed in opposite directions. Thus, for instance, he really loved liberty, as only a novelist can love it, a man mainly occupied with the variety and vivacity of men. But he could not see the cause of liberty except where the Victorian English saw it; he could not see it in the cause of Irish liberty (which was exactly like the cause of Polish or Italian liberty, except that it was led by much more religious and responsible men), and he made the Irish characters the object of much innocent and rather lumbering satire. But this was not his mistake, but the mistake of the atmosphere, and he was a sublime emotional Englishman, who lived by atmosphere. He was a great sensitive. The comparison between him

and Dickens is commonly as clumsy and unreasonable as a comparison between Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade or Bulwer Lytton and Anthony Trollope. But the comparison really has this element of actuality: that Dickens was above all things creative; Thackeray was above all things receptive. There is no sense in talking about truth in the matter; both are modes of truth. If you like to put it so, the world imposed on Thackeray and Dickens imposed on the world. But it could be put more truly by saying that Thackeray represents, in that gigantic parody called genius, the spirit of the Englishman in repose. This spirit is the idle embodiment of all of us; by his weaknesses we shall fail and by his enormous sanities we shall endure.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

VANITY FAIR

[As an artistic scheme *Vanity Fair* may be described in more than one outline. Very broadly, of course, it starts with the two typical English girls leaving school, and is the tale of their equally tragic yet startlingly dissimilar fortunes. Amelia Sedley, the gentler and weaker of the two, begins in prosperity, and is, in a sense, betrayed and crushed on her first appearance in real life. She marries a shallow lady-killer named George Osborne, the son of a vulgar and violent plutocrat who had originally owed everything to the Sedleys. George Osborne is killed at Waterloo, perhaps the only event which could have retained for him his wife's respect. On the very night before the battle he had solicited the other woman.

The other woman, the great Becky Sharp, began penniless and adventurous. She is husband hunting almost in the first scene, but her ultimate worldly success is so dazzling that she must have regarded all her previous failures as so many fortunate escapes. Eventually she marries Captain Rawdon Crawley, the younger son of an aristocratic yet bucolic family. He is dull and dissipated, but her energy and plausibility are such that she drags him behind her into the highest circles of fashionable England. Here she meets the sinister Lord Steyne, who enriches and supports her with mixed admiration and contempt, and in whose company she is found by her husband under circumstances which blast her for ever. Thus Becky Sharp breaks her teeth on something hard and bitter in the heart of a sweetmeat, almost at the same time that Amelia is finding at last something faintly sweet in the smell of crushed leaves and bitter herbs. Amelia marries the shy and clumsy suitor who has always been faithful; Becky hovers like a vulture over the idiocy and helplessness of the fool whom she had first sought to entrap. Neither is meant for a happy ending in the high romantic sense; but there is all the difference between something that is a second best and something that is almost the worst.

But there are other schemes of contrast in the tale, besides that between Becky and Amelia. One of them is the very able contrast

between the Sedleys and the Osbornes, both middle class, wealthy, and in a manner vulgar, but one insensibly rising in the world and the other sinking. It is about the declining fortunes of the Sedleys that old Mr. Osborne has his quarrel with his son George. He wishes George to marry Miss Swartz, a West Indian heiress, and to break off the match with the daughter of the decaying Sedley house, a match which he has himself arranged. And the scene in which he makes this attempt is an instance of yet a third study in contrast—the contrast between two generations of the worldly bourgeoisie, both intrinsically vulgar, yet not equally coarse; the father by far the more brutal and the son by far the more selfish; the selfish man in the right and the brutal man in the wrong.]

MR. OSBORNE, SENIOR, AND MR. OSBORNE, JUNIOR

(Chapter XXI)

Love may be felt for any young lady endowed with such qualities as Miss Swartz possessed; and a great dream of ambition entered into old Mr. Osborne's soul, which she was to realize. He encouraged, with the utmost enthusiasm and friendliness, his daughters' amiable attachment to the young heiress, and protested that it gave him the sincerest pleasure as a father to see the love of his girls so well disposed.

"You won't find," he would say to Miss Rhoda, "that splendour and rank to which you are accustomed at the West End, my dear Miss, at our humble mansion in Russell Square. My daughters are plain, disinterested girls, but their hearts are in the right place, and they've conceived an attachment for you which does them honour —I say, which does them honour. I'm a plain, simple, humble British merchant—an honest one, as my respected friends Hulker and Bullock will vouch, who were the correspondents of your late lamented father. You'll find us a united, simple, happy, and I think I may say respected family—a plain table, a plain people, but a warm welcome, my dear Miss Rhoda—Rhoda, let me say, for my heart warms to you, it does really. I'm a frank man, and I like you. A glass of champagne! Hicks, champagne to Miss Swartz."

There is little doubt that old Osborne believed all he said, and that the girls were quite earnest in their protestations of affection for Miss Swartz. People in Vanity Fair fasten on to rich folks quite naturally. If the simplest people are disposed to look not a little kindly on great Prosperity (for I defy any member of the British public to say that the notion of Wealth has not something awful and pleasing to him; and you, if you are told that the man next you at dinner has got half a million, not to look at him with a certain interest;)—if the simple look benevolently on money, how much more do your old worldlings regard it! Their affections rush out to meet and welcome money. Their kind sentiments awaken spontaneously towards the interesting possessors of it. I know some respectable people who don't consider themselves at liberty to indulge in friendship for any individual who has not a certain competency, or place in society. They give a loose to their feelings on proper occasions. And the proof is, that the major part of the Osborne family, who had not, in fifteen years, been able to get up a hearty regard for Amelia Sedley, became as fond of Miss Swartz in the course of a single evening as the most romantic advocate of friendship at first sight could desire.

What a match for George she'd be (the sisters and Miss Wirt agreed), and how much better than that insignificant little Amelia! Such a dashing young fellow as he is, with his good looks, rank, and accomplishments, would be the very husband for her. Visions of balls in Portland Place, presentations at Court, and introductions to half the peerage, filled the minds of the young ladies; who talked of nothing but George and his grand acquaintances to their beloved new friend.

Old Osborne thought she would be a great match, too, for his son. He should leave the army; he should go into Parliament; he should cut a figure in the fashion and in the state. His blood boiled with honest British exultation, as he saw the name of Osborne ennobled in the person of his son, and thought that he might be the progenitor of a glorious line of baronets. He worked in

the City and on 'Change, until he knew everything relating to the fortune of the heiress, how her money was placed, and where her estates lay. Young Fred Bullock, one of his chief informants, would have liked to make a bid for her himself (it was so the young banker expressed it), only he was booked to Maria Osborne. But not being able to secure her as a wife, the disinterested Fred quite approved of her as a sister-in-law. "Let George cut in directly and win her," was his advice. "Strike while the iron's hot, you know—while she's fresh to the town: in a few weeks some d—— fellow from the West End will come in with a title and a rotten rent-roll and cut all us City men out, as Lord Fitzrufus did last year with Miss Grogram, who was actually engaged to Podder, of Podder & Brown's. The sooner it is done the better, Mr. Osborne; them's my sentiments," the wag said; though, when Osborne had left the bank parlour, Mr. Bullock remembered Amelia, and what a pretty girl she was, and how attached to George Osborne; and he gave up at least ten seconds of his valuable time to regretting the misfortune which had befallen that unlucky young woman.

While thus George Osborne's good feelings, and his good friend and genius, Dobbin, were carrying back the truant to Amelia's feet, George's parent and sisters were arranging this splendid match for him, which they never dreamed he would resist.

When the elder Osborne gave what he called "a hint," there was no possibility for the most obtuse to mistake his meaning. He called kicking a footman down-stairs, a hint to the latter to leave his service. With his usual frankness and delicacy he told Mrs. Haggistoun that he would give her a cheque for five thousand pounds on the day his son was married to her ward; and called that proposal a hint, and considered it a very dexterous piece of diplomacy. He gave George finally such another hint regarding the heiress; and ordered him to marry her out of hand, as he would have ordered his butler to draw a cork, or his clerk to write a letter.

This imperative hint disturbed George a good deal.

He was in the very first enthusiasm and delight of his second courtship of Amelia, which was inexpressibly sweet to him. The contrast of her manners and appearance with those of the heiress, made the idea of a union with the latter appear doubly ludicrous and odious. Carriages and opera-boxes, thought he; fancy being seen in them by the side of such a mahogany charmer as that! Add to all, that the junior Osborne was quite as obstinate as the Senior: when he wanted a thing, quite as firm in his resolution to get it; and quite as violent when angered, as his father in his most stern moments.

On the first day when his father formally gave him the hint that he was to place his affections at Miss Swartz's feet, George temporized with the old gentleman. "You should have thought of the matter sooner, sir," he said. "It can't be done now, when we're expecting every day to go on foreign service. Wait till my return, if I do return;" and then he represented, that the time when the regiment was daily expecting to quit England, was exceedingly ill-chosen: that the few days or weeks during which they were still to remain at home, must be devoted to business and not to love-making: time enough for that when he came home with his majority; "for, I promise you," said he, with a satisfied air, "that one way or other you shall read the name of George Osborne in the *Gazette*."

The father's reply to this was founded upon the information which he had got in the City: that the West End chaps would infallibly catch hold of the heiress if any delay took place: that if he didn't marry Miss S., he might at least have an engagement in writing, to come into effect when he returned to England; and that a man who could get ten thousand a year by staying at home, was a fool to risk his life abroad.

"So that you would have me shown up as a coward, sir, and our name dishonoured for the sake of Miss Swartz's money," George interposed.

This remark staggered the old gentleman; but as he had to reply to it, and as his mind was nevertheless made up, he said, "You will dine here to-morrow, sir,

and every day Miss Swartz comes, you will be here to pay your respects to her. If you want for money, call upon Mr. Chopper." Thus a new obstacle was in George's way, to interfere with his plans regarding Amelia; and about which he and Dobbin had more than one confidential consultation. His friend's opinion respecting the line of conduct which he ought to pursue, we know already. And as for Osborne, when he was once bent on a thing, a fresh obstacle or two only rendered him the more resolute.

The dark object of the conspiracy into which the chiefs of the Osborne family had entered, was quite ignorant of all their plans regarding her (which, strange to say, her friend and chaperon did not divulge), and, taking all the young ladies' flattery for genuine sentiment, and being, as we have before had occasion to show, of a very warm and impetuous nature, responded to their affection with quite a tropical ardour. And if the truth may be told, I daresay that she too had some selfish attraction in the Russell Square house; and in a word, thought George Osborne a very nice young man. His whiskers had made an impression upon her, on the very first night she beheld them at the ball at Messrs. Hulkers; and, as we know, she was not the first woman who had been charmed by them. George had an air at once swaggering and melancholy, languid and fierce. He looked like a man who had passions, secrets, and private harrowing griefs and adventures. His voice was rich and deep. He would say it was a warm evening, or ask his partner to take an ice, with a tone as sad and confidential as if he were breaking her mother's death to her, or preluding a declaration of love. He trampled over all the young bucks of his father's circle, and was the hero among those third-rate men. Some few sneered at him and hated him. Some, like Dobbin, fanatically admired him. And his whiskers had begun to do their work, and to curl themselves round the affections of Miss Swartz.

Whenever there was a chance of meeting him in

Russell Square, that simple and good-natured young woman was quite in a flurry to see her dear Miss Osbornes. She went to great expenses in new gowns, and bracelets, and bonnets, and in prodigious feathers. She adorned her person with her utmost skill to please the Conqueror, and exhibited all her simple accomplishments to win his favour. The girls would ask her, with the greatest gravity, for a little music, and she would sing her three songs and play her two little pieces as often as ever they asked, and with an always increasing pleasure to herself. During these delectable entertainments, Miss Wirt and the chaperon sat by, and conned over the peerage, and talked about the nobility.

The day after George had his hint from his father, and a short time before the hour of dinner, he was lolling upon a sofa in the drawing-room in a very becoming and perfectly natural attitude of melancholy. He had been, at his father's request, to Mr. Chopper in the City (the old gentleman, though he gave great sums to his son, would never specify any fixed allowance for him, and rewarded him only as he was in the humour). He had then been to pass three hours with Amelia, his dear little Amelia, at Fulham; and he came home to find his sisters spread in starched muslin in the drawing-room, the dowagers cackling in the background, and honest Swartz in her favourite amber-coloured satin, with turquoise bracelets, countless rings, flowers, feathers, and all sorts of tags and gimcracks, about as elegantly decorated as a she chimney-sweep on May-day.

The girls, after vain attempts to engage him in conversation, talked about fashions and the last drawing-room until he was perfectly sick of their chatter. He contrasted their behaviour with little Emmy's—their shrill voices with her tender ringing tones; their attitudes and their elbows and their starch, with her humble soft movements and modest graces. Poor Swartz was seated in a place where Emmy had been accustomed to sit. Her bejewelled hands lay sprawling in her amber satin lap. Her tags and ear-rings twinkled, and her big

eyes rolled about. She was doing nothing with perfect contentment, and thinking herself charming. Anything so becoming as the satin the sisters had never seen.

"Dammy," George said to a confidential friend, "she looked like a China doll, which has nothing to do all day but to grin and wag its head. By Jove, Will, it was all I could do to prevent myself from throwing the sofa-cushion at her." He restrained that exhibition of sentiment, however.

The sisters began to play the Battle of Prague. "Stop that d—— thing," George howled out in a fury from the sofa. "It makes me mad. *You* play us somethink, Miss Swartz, do. Sing something, anything but the Battle of Prague."

"Shall I sing Blue-Eyed Mary, or the air from the Cabinet?" Miss Swartz asked.

"That sweet thing from the Cabinet," the sisters said.

"We've had that," replied the misanthrope on the sofa.

"I can sing Fluvy du Tajy," Swartz said, in a meek voice, "if I had the words." It was the last of the worthy young woman's collection.

"O, Fleuve du Tage," Miss Maria cried; "we have the song," and went off to fetch the book in which it was.

Now it happened that this song, then in the height of the fashion, had been given to the young ladies by a young friend of theirs, whose name was on the title, and Miss Swartz, having concluded the ditty with George's applause (for he remembered that it was a favourite of Amelia's), was hoping for an encore perhaps, and fiddling with the leaves of the music, when her eye fell upon the title, and she saw Amelia Sedley written in the corner.

"Lor'!" cried Miss Swartz, spinning swiftly round on the music-stool, "is it *my* Amelia? Amelia that was at Miss P.'s at Hammersmith? I know it is. It 's her, and —Tell me about her—where is she?

"Don't mention her," Miss Maria Osborne said hastily. "Her family has disgraced itself. Her father

cheated papa, and as for her, she is never to be mentioned *here*." This was Miss Maria's return for George's rudeness about the Battle of Prague.

"Are you a friend of Amelia's?" George said, bouncing up. "God bless you for it, Miss Swartz. Don't believe what the girls say. *She's* not to blame at any rate. She's the best——"

"You know you're not to speak about her, George," cried Jane. "Papa forbids it."

"Who's to prevent me?" George cried out. "I *will* speak of her. I say she's the best, the kindest, the gentlest, the sweetest girl in England; and that, bankrupt or no, my sisters are not fit to hold candles to her. If you like her, go and see her, Miss Swartz; she wants friends now; and I say, God bless everybody who befriends her. Anybody who speaks kindly of her is my friend; anybody who speaks against her is my enemy. Thank you, Miss Swartz;" and he went up and wrung her hand.

"George! George!" one of the sisters cried imploringly.

"I say," George said fiercely, "I thank everybody who loves Amelia Sed——" He stopped. Old Osborne was in the room with a face livid with rage, and eyes like hot coals.

Though George had stopped in his sentence, yet, his blood being up, he was not to be cowed by all the generations of Osborne; rallying instantly, he replied to the bullying look of his father, with another so indicative of resolution and defiance, that the elder man quailed in his turn, and looked away. He felt that the tussle was coming. "Mrs. Haggistoun, let me take you down to dinner," he said. "Give your arm to Miss Swartz, George," and they marched.

"Miss Swartz, I love Amelia, and we've been engaged almost all our lives," Osborne said to his partner; and during all the dinner, George rattled on with a volubility which surprised himself, and made his father doubly nervous for the fight which was to take place as soon as the ladies were gone.

The difference between the pair was, that while the father was violent and a bully, the son had thrice the nerve and courage of the parent, and could not merely make an attack, but resist it; and finding that the moment was now come when the contest between him and his father was to be decided, he took his dinner with perfect coolness and appetite before the engagement began. Old Osborne, on the contrary, was nervous, and drank much. He floundered in his conversation with the ladies, his neighbours; George's coolness only rendering him more angry. It made him half mad to see the calm way in which George, flapping his napkin, and with a swaggering bow, opened the door for the ladies to leave the room; and filling himself a glass of wine, smacked it, and looked his father full in the face, as if to say, "Gentleman of the Guard, fire first." The old man also took a supply of ammunition, but his decanter clinked against the glass as he tried to fill it.

After giving a great heave, and with a purple choking face, he then began. "How dare you, sir, mention that person's name before Miss Swartz to-day, in my drawing-room? I ask you, sir, how dare you do it?"

"Stop, sir," says George, "don't say dare, sir. Dare isn't a word to be used to a Captain in the British Army."

"I shall say what I like to my son, sir. I can cut him off with a shilling if I like. I can make him a beggar if I like. I *will* say what I like," the elder said.

"I'm a gentleman though I *am* your son, sir," George answered haughtily. "Any communications which you have to make to me, or any orders which you may please to give, I beg may be couched in that kind of language which I am accustomed to hear."

Whenever the lad assumed his haughty manner, it always created either great awe or great irritation in the parent. Old Osborne stood in secret terror of his son as a better gentleman than himself; and perhaps my readers may have remarked in their experience of this Vanity Fair of ours, that there is no character

which a low-minded man so much mistrusts, as that of a gentleman.

"My father didn't give me the education you have had, nor the advantages you have had, nor the money you have had. If I had kept the company *some folks* have had through *my means*, perhaps my son wouldn't have any reason to brag, sir, of his *superiority* and *West End airs* (these words were uttered in the elder Osborne's most sarcastic tones). But it wasn't considered the part of a gentleman in *my* time, for a man to insult his father. If I'd done any such thing, mine would have kicked me down-stairs, sir."

"I never insulted you, sir. I said I begged you to remember your son was a gentleman as well as yourself. I know very well that you give me plenty of money," said George (fingering a bundle of notes which he had got in the morning from Mr. Chopper). "You tell it me often enough, sir. There's no fear of my forgetting it."

"I wish you'd remember other things as well, sir," the sire answered. "I wish you'd remember that in this house—so long as you choose to *honour* it with your *company*, Captain—I'm the master, and that name, and that that—that you—that I say——"

"That what, sir?" George asked, with scarcely a sneer, filling another glass of claret.

"——!" burst out his father with a screaming oath —"that the name of those Sedleys never be mentioned here, sir—not one of the whole damned lot of 'em, sir."

"It wasn't I, sir, that introduced Miss Sedley's name. It was my sisters who spoke ill of her to Miss Swartz; and by Jove I'll defend her wherever I go. Nobody shall speak lightly of that name in my presence. Our family has done her quite enough injury already, I think, and may leave off reviling her now she's down. I'll shoot any man but you who says a word against her."

"Go on, sir, go on," the old gentleman said, his eyes starting out of his head.

"Go on about what, sir? about the way in which we've treated that angel of a girl? Who told me to love

her? It was your doing. I might have chosen elsewhere, and looked higher, perhaps, than your society: but I obeyed you. And now that her heart 's mine you give me orders to fling it away, and punish her, kill her perhaps—for the faults of other people. It 's a shame, by Heavens," said George, working himself up into passion and enthusiasm as he proceeded, "to play at fast and loose with a young girl's affections—and with such an angel as that—one so superior to the people amongst whom she lived, that she might have excited envy, only she was so good and gentle, that it 's a wonder anybody dared to hate her. If I desert her, sir, do you suppose she forgets me?"

"I ain't going to have any of this dam sentimental nonsense and humbug here, sir," the father cried out. "There shall be no beggar-marriages in my family. If you choose to fling away eight thousand a-year, which you may have for the asking, you may do it: but by Jove you take your pack and walk out of this house, sir. Will you do as I tell you, once for all, sir, or will you not?"

"Marry that mulatto woman?" George said, pulling up his shirt-collars. "I don't like the colour, sir. Ask the black that sweeps opposite Fleet Market, sir. *I'm* not going to marry a Hottentot Venus."

Mr. Osborne pulled frantically at the cord by which he was accustomed to summon the butler when he wanted wine—and, almost black in the face, ordered that functionary to call a coach for Captain Osborne.

"I've done it," said George, coming into the Slaughters' an hour afterwards, looking very pale.

"What, my boy?" says Dobbin.

George told what had passed between his father and himself.

"I'll marry her to-morrow," he said with an oath. "I love her more every day, Dobbin."

THE FALL OF BECKY SHARP

(Chapter LIII)

[Becky Sharp, as Mrs. Rawdon Crawley, has reached the height of social splendour and triumph. The Prince Regent has applauded her amateur acting, and the great Lord Steyne continues to patronize both her husband and herself. Her husband, in spite of these external successes, still has outstanding debts; and as he leaves Lord Steyne's house he is seized abruptly by bailiffs and carried off to spend the night in a sponging-house. He sends a message to his wife, but she replies with every appearance of pathos that she is ill and can do nothing. Rawdon Crawley's brother, Sir Pitt Crawley, however, has married a woman of prompt and instinctive goodness, and it is to her that Rawdon next appeals. The result is the tragic scene that ends the great adventuress's married life.]

Friend Rawdon drove on then to Mr. Moss's mansion in Cursitor Street, and was duly inducted into that dismal place of hospitality. Morning was breaking over the cheerful house-tops of Chancery Lane as the rattling cab woke up the echoes there. A little pink-eyed Jew-boy, with a head as ruddy as the rising morn, let the party into the house, and Rawdon was welcomed to the ground-floor apartments by Mr. Moss, his travelling companion and host, who cheerfully asked him if he would like a glass of something warm after his drive.

The Colonel was not so depressed as some mortals would be, who, quitting a palace and a *placens uxor*, find themselves barred into a sponging-house, for if the truth must be told, he had been a lodger at Mr. Moss's establishment once or twice before. We have not thought it necessary in the previous course of this narrative to mention these trivial little domestic incidents: but the reader may be assured that they can't unfrequently occur in the life of a man who lives on nothing a-year.

Upon his first visit to Mr. Moss, the Colonel, then a bachelor, had been liberated by the generosity of his aunt; on the second mishap, little Becky, with the greatest spirit and kindness, had borrowed a sum of

money from Lord Southdown, and had coaxed her husband's creditor (who was her shawl, velvet-gown, lace pocket-handkerchief, trinket, and gimcrack purveyor, indeed) to take a portion of the sum claimed, and Rawdon's promissory note for the remainder: so on both these occasions the capture and release had been conducted with the utmost gallantry on all sides, and Moss and the Colonel were therefore on the very best of terms.

"You'll find your old bed, Colonel, and everything comfortable," that gentleman said, "as I may honestly say. You may be pretty sure it 's kep' aired, and by the best of company, too. It was slep' in the night afore last by the Honourable Capting Famish, of the Fiftieth Dragoons, whose Mar took him out, after a fortnight, jest to punish him, she said. But, Law bless you, I promise you, he punished my champagne, and had a party 'ere every night—reg'lar tip-top swells, down from the Clubs and the West End—Capting Ragg, the Honourable Deuceace, who lives in the Temple, and some fellers as knows a good glass of wine, I warrant you. I've got a Doctor of Diwinity up-stairs, five gents in the Coffee-room, and Mrs. Moss has a tably-dy-hoty at half-past five, and a little cards or music afterwards, when we shall be most happy to see you."

"I'll ring when I want anything," said Rawdon, and went quietly to his bed-room. He was an old soldier, we have said, and not to be disturbed by any little shocks of fate. A weaker man would have sent off a letter to his wife on the instant of his capture. "But what is the use of disturbing her night's rest?" thought Rawdon. "She won't know whether I am in my room or not. It will be time enough to write to her when she has had her sleep out, and I have had mine. It 's only a hundred-and-seventy, and the deuce is in it if we can't raise that." And so, thinking about little Rawdon (whom he would not have know that he was in such a queer place), the Colonel turned into the bed lately occupied by Captain Famish, and fell asleep. It was ten o'clock when he woke up, and the ruddy-headed youth brought him, with conscious pride, a fine silver dressing-case,

wherewith he might perform the operation of shaving. Indeed Mr. Moss's house, though somewhat dirty, was splendid throughout. There were dirty trays, and wine-coolers *en permanence* on the sideboard, huge dirty gilt cornices, with dingy yellow satin hangings to the barred windows which looked into Cursitor Street—vast and dirty gilt picture-frames surrounding pieces sporting and sacred, all of which works were by the greatest masters; and fetched the greatest prices, too, in the bill transactions, in the course of which they were sold and bought over and over again. The Colonel's breakfast was served to him in the same dingy and gorgeous plated ware. Miss Moss, a dark-eyed maid in curl-papers, appeared with the teapot, and smiling, asked the Colonel how he had slep'? and she brought him in the *Morning Post*, with the names of all the great people who had figured at Lord Steyne's entertainment the night before. It contained a brilliant account of the festivities, and of the beautiful and accomplished Mrs. Rawdon Crawley's admirable personifications.

After a lively chat with this lady (who sat on the edge of the breakfast-table in an easy attitude, displaying the drapery of her stocking and an ex-white satin shoe, which was down at heel), Colonel Crawley called for pens and ink, and paper; and being asked how many sheets, chose one which was brought to him between Miss Moss's own finger and thumb. Many a sheet had that dark-eyed damsel brought in; many a poor fellow had scrawled and blotted hurried lines of entreaty, and paced up and down that awful room until his messenger brought back the reply. Poor men always use messengers instead of the post. Who has not had their letters, with the wafers wet, and the announcement that a person is waiting in the hall?

Now on the score of his application, Rawdon had not many misgivings.

Dear Becky (Rawdon wrote)—

I hope you slept well. Don't be *frightened* if I don't bring you in your *coffy*. Last night as I was coming home smoaking, I met with an *accadent*. I was *nabbed* by Moss of

Cursitor Street—from whose *gilt and splendid parler* I write this—the same that had me this time two years. Miss Moss brought in my tea—she is grown very *fat*, and, as usual, had *her stockens down at heal.*

It's Nathan's business—a hundred-and-fifty—with costs, hundred-and-seventy. Please send me my desk and some *cloths*—I'm in pumps and a white tye (something like Miss M.'s stockings)—I've seventy in it. And as soon as you get this drive to Nathan's—offer him seventy-five down, and ask *him to renew*—say I'll take wine—we may as well have some dinner sherry; but not *picturs*, they're too dear.

If he won't stand it. Take my ticker and such of your things as you can *spare*, and send them to Balls—we must, of coarse, have the sum to-night. It won't do to let it stand over, as to-morrow's Sunday; the beds here are not very *clean*, and there may be other things out against me—I'm glad it an't Rawdon's Saturday for coming home. God bless you.

Yours in haste,
R. C.

P.S.—Make haste and come."

This letter, sealed with a wafer, was dispatched by one of the messengers who are always hanging about Mr. Moss's establishment; and Rawdon, having seen him depart, went out in the court-yard, and smoked his cigar with a tolerably easy mind—in spite of the bars overhead; for Mr. Moss's court-yard is railed in like a cage, lest the gentlemen who are boarding with him should take a fancy to escape from his hospitality.

Three hours, he calculated, would be the utmost time required, before Becky should arrive and open his prison doors: and he passed these pretty cheerfully in smoking, in reading the paper, and in the coffee-room with an acquaintance, Captain Walker, who happened to be there, and with whom he cut for sixpences for some hours, with pretty equal luck on either side.

But the day passed away and no messenger returned, —no Becky. Mr. Moss's tably-dy-hoty was served at the appointed hour of half-past five, when such of the gentlemen lodging in the house as could afford to pay for the banquet, came and partook of it in the splendid front parlour before described, and with which Mr.

Crawley's temporary lodging communicated, when Miss M. (Miss Hem, as her papa called her), appeared without the curl-papers of the morning, and Mrs. M. did the honours of a prime boiled leg of mutton and turnips, of which the Colonel ate with a very faint appetite, Asked whether he would "stand" a bottle of champagne for the company, he consented, and the ladies drank to his 'ealth, and Mr. Moss, in the most polite manner, "looked towards him."

In the midst of this repast, however, the door-bell was heard,—young Moss of the ruddy hair rose up with the keys and answered the summons, and coming back, told the Colonel that the messenger had returned with a bag, a desk, and a letter, which he gave him. "No ceramony, Colonel, I beg," said Mrs. Moss with a wave of her hand, and he opened the letter rather tremulously.—It was a beautiful letter, highly scented, on a pink paper, and with a light green seal:

Mon pauvre cher petit (Mrs. Crawley wrote)—

I could not sleep *one wink* for thinking of what had become of *my odious old monstre:* and only got to rest in the morning after sending for Mr. Blench (for I was in a fever), who gave me a composing draught and left orders with Fifine that I should be disturbed *on no account.* So that my poor old man's messenger, who had *bien mauvaise mine,* Fifine says, and *sentoit le genièvre,* remained in the hall for some hours waiting my bell. You may fancy my state when I read your poor dear old ill-spelt letter.

Ill as I was, I instantly called for the carriage, and as soon as I was dressed (though I couldn't drink a drop of chocolate—I assure you I couldn't without my *monstre* to bring it to me), I drove *ventre à terre* to Nathan's. I saw him—I wept—I cried—I fell at his odious knees. Nothing would mollify the horrid man. He would have all the money, he said, or keep my poor monstre in prison. I drove home with the intention of paying that *triste visite chez mon oncle* (when every trinket I have should be at your disposal, though they would not fetch a hundred pounds, for some, you know, are with *ce cher oncle* already), and found Milor there with the Bulgarian old sheep-faced monstre who had come to compliment me upon last night's performances. Paddington came in, too, drawling and lisping and twiddling his hair; so did Champignac, and his

chef—everybody with *foison* of compliments and pretty speeches —plaguing poor me, who longed to be rid of them, and was thinking *every moment of the time* of *mon pauvre prisonnier.*

When they were gone, I went down on my knees to Milor; told him we were going to pawn everything, and begged and prayed him to give me two hundred pounds. He pish'd and psha'd in a fury—told me not to be such a fool as to pawn—and said he would see whether he could lend me the money. At last he went away, promising that he would send it me in the morning: when I will bring it to my poor old monster with a kiss from his affectionate

BECKY.

I am writing in bed. Oh I have such a headache and such a heartache!

When Rawdon read over this letter, he turned so red and looked so savage, that the company at the table-d'hôte easily perceived that bad news had reached him. All his suspicions, which he had been trying to banish, returned upon him. She could not even go out and sell her trinkets to free him. She could laugh and talk about compliments paid to her, whilst he was in prison. Who had put him there? Wenham had walked with him. Was there . . . He could hardly bear to think of what he suspected. Leaving the room hurriedly, he ran into his own—opened his desk, wrote two hurried lines, which he directed to Sir Pitt or Lady Crawley, and bade the messenger carry them at once to Gaunt Street, bidding him to take a cab, and promising him a guinea if he was back in an hour.

In the note he besought his dear brother and sister, for the sake of God; for the sake of his dear child and his honour; to come to him and relieve him from his difficulty. He was in prison: he wanted a hundred pounds to set him free—he entreated them to come to him.

He went back to the dining-room after dispatching his messenger, and called for more wine. He laughed and talked with a strange boisterousness, as the people thought. Sometimes he laughed madly at his own fears, and went on drinking for an hour; listening all the

while for the carriage which was to bring his fate back.

At the expiration of that time, wheels were heard whirling up to the gate—the young Janitor went out with his gate-keys. It was a lady whom he let in at the bailiff's door.

"Colonel Crawley," she said, trembling very much. He, with a knowing look, locked the outer door upon her—then unlocked and opened the inner one, and calling out, "Colonel, you're wanted," led her into the back parlour, which he occupied.

Rawdon came in from the dining-parlour where all those people were carousing, into his back room; a flare of coarse light following him into the apartment where the lady stood, still very nervous.

"It is I, Rawdon," she said, in a timid voice, which she strove to render cheerful. "It is Jane." Rawdon was quite overcome by that kind voice and presence. He ran up to her—caught her in his arms—gasped out some inarticulate words of thanks, and fairly sobbed on her shoulder. She did not know the cause of his emotion.

The bills of Mr. Moss were quickly settled, perhaps to the disappointment of that gentleman, who had counted on having the Colonel as his guest over Sunday at least; and Jane, with beaming smiles and happiness in her eyes, carried away Rawdon from the bailiff's house, and they went homewards in the cab in which she had hastened to his release. "Pitt was gone to a parliamentary dinner," she said, when Rawdon's note came, "and so, dear Rawdon, I—I came myself;" and she put her kind hand in his. Perhaps it was well for Rawdon Crawley that Pitt was away at that dinner. Rawdon thanked his sister a hundred times, and with an ardour of gratitude which touched and almost alarmed that soft-hearted woman. "Oh," said he, in his rude, artless way, "you—you don't know how I'm changed since I've known you—and—and little Rawdy. I—I'd like to change somehow. You see I want—I want—to be—" He did not finish the sentence, but she could

interpret it. And that night after he left her, and as she sate by her own little boy's bed, she prayed humbly for that poor wayworn sinner.

Rawdon left her and walked home rapidly. It was nine o'clock at night. He ran across the streets, and the great squares of Vanity Fair, and at length came up breathless opposite his own house. He started back and fell against the railings, trembling as he looked up. The drawing-room windows were blazing with light. She had said that she was in bed and ill. He stood there for some time, the light from the rooms on his pale face.

He took out his door-key and let himself into the house. He could hear laughter in the upper rooms. He was in the ball-dress in which he had been captured the night before. He went silently up the stairs; leaning against the banisters at the stair-head. Nobody was stirring in the house besides—all the servants had been sent away. Rawdon heard laughter within—laughter and singing. Becky was singing a snatch of the song of the night before: a hoarse voice shouted "Brava! Brava!"—it was Lord Steyne's.

Rawdon opened the door and went in. A little table with a dinner was laid out—and wine and plate. Steyne was hanging over the sofa on which Becky sat. The wretched woman was in a brilliant full toilette, her arms and all her fingers sparkling with bracelets and rings; and the brilliants on her breast which Steyne had given her. He had her hand in his, and was bowing over it to kiss it, when Becky started up with a faint scream as she caught sight of Rawdon's white face. At the next instant she tried a smile, a horrid smile, as if to welcome her husband: and Steyne rose up, grinding his teeth, pale, and with fury in his looks.

He, too, attempted a laugh—and came forward holding out his hand. "What, come back! How d'ye do, Crawley?" he said, the nerves of his mouth twitching as he tried to grin at the intruder.

There was that in Rawdon's face which caused Becky to fling herself before him. "I am innocent, Rawdon,"

she said; "before God, I am innocent." She clung hold of his coat, of his hands; her own were all covered with serpents, and rings, and baubles. "I am innocent.—Say I am innocent," she said to Lord Steyne.

He thought a trap had been laid for him, and was as furious with the wife as with the husband. "You innocent! Damn you," he screamed out. "You innocent! Why every trinket you have on your body is paid for by me. I have given you thousands of pounds which this fellow has spent, and for which he has sold you. Innocent, by ——! You're as innocent as your mother, the ballet-girl, and your husband the bully. Don't think to frighten me as you have done others. Make way, sir, and let me pass;" and Lord Steyne seized up his hat, and, with flame in his eyes, and looking his enemy fiercely in the face, marched upon him, never for a moment doubting that the other would give way.

But Rawdon Crawley springing out, seized him by the neck-cloth, until Steyne, almost strangled, writhed, and bent under his arm. "You lie, you dog!" said Rawdon. "You lie, you coward and villain!" And he struck the Peer twice over the face with his open hand, and flung him bleeding to the ground. It was all done before Rebecca could interpose. She stood there trembling before him. She admired her husband, strong, brave, and victorious.

"Come here," he said.—She came up at once.

"Take off those things."—She began, trembling, pulling the jewels from her arms, and the rings from her shaking fingers, and held them all in a heap, quivering, and looking up at him. "Throw them down," he said, and she dropped them. He tore the diamond ornament out of her breast, and flung it at Lord Steyne. It cut him on his bald forehead. Steyne wore the scar to his dying day.

"Come up-stairs," Rawdon said to his wife. "Don't kill me, Rawdon," she said. He laughed savagely.—"I want to see if that man lies about the money as he has about me. Has he given you any?"

"No," said Rebecca, "that is——"

"Give me your keys," Rawdon answered, and they went out together.

Rebecca gave him all the keys but one: and she was in hopes that he would not have remarked the absence of that. It belonged to the little desk which Amelia had given her in early days, and which she kept in a secret place. But Rawdon flung open boxes and wardrobes, throwing the multifarious trumpery of their contents here and there, and at last he found the desk. The woman was forced to open it. It contained papers, love-letters many years old—all sorts of small trinkets and woman's memoranda. And it contained a pocket-book with bank-notes. Some of these were dated ten years back, too, and one was quite a fresh one—a note for a thousand pounds which Lord Steyne had given her.

"Did he give you this?" Rawdon said.

"Yes," Rebecca answered.

"I'll send it to him to-day," Rawdon said (for day had dawned again, and many hours had passed in this search), "and I will pay Briggs, who was kind to the boy, and some of the debts. You will let me know where I shall send the rest to you. You might have spared me a hundred pounds, Becky, out of all this—I have always shared with you."

"I am innocent," said Becky. And he left her without another word.

What were her thoughts when he left her? She remained for hours after he was gone, the sunshine pouring into the room, and Rebecca sitting alone on the bed's edge. The drawers were all opened and their contents scattered about,—dresses and feathers, scarfs and trinkets, a heap of tumbled vanities lying in a wreck. Her hair was falling over her shoulders; her gown was torn where Rawdon had wrenched the brilliants out of it. She heard him go down-stairs a few minutes after he left her, and the door slamming and closing on him. She knew he would never come back. He was gone for ever. Would he kill himself?—she thought—not until after he had met Lord Steyne. She thought of her long

past life, and all the dismal incidents of it. Ah, how dreary it seemed, how miserable, lonely and profitless! Should she take laudanum, and end it, too—have done with all hopes, schemes, debts, and triumphs! The French maid found her in this position—sitting in the midst of her miserable ruins with clasped hands and dry eyes. The woman was her accomplice, and in Steyne's pay. "Mon Dieu, Madame, what has happened?" she asked.

What *had* happened? Was she guilty or not? She said not; but who could tell what was truth which came from those lips; or if that corrupt heart was in this case pure? All her lies and her schemes, all her selfishness and her wiles, all her wit and genius had come to this bankruptcy. The woman closed the curtains, and with some entreaty and show of kindness, persuaded her mistress to lie down on the bed. Then she went below and gathered up the trinkets which had been lying on the floor since Rebecca dropped them there at her husband's orders, and Lord Steyne went away.

THE LAST MEETING OF BECKY AND AMELIA

(From Chapter LXVII)

[Amelia Osborne, now a widow of long standing with a son to whom all her emotions are tied, has more than once refused Major Dobbin, the old and almost dumb admirer, who had given her her husband, and can only haltingly propose to replace him. In the course of her humble efforts to live she visits a German Spa, where she finds herself face to face with the admirable and equivocal figure that had once been her closest friend. Rebecca Crawley is there, Rebecca after the catastrophe, after the jewels have been torn from her arms and the success from her cynicism, still full of audacity, but no longer of hope. In this strange and sinister last glimpse of her she does a good action; the scene is one of the simplest and strongest in Thackeray, and it must speak for itself.]

Amelia had been made aware of some of these movements. The correspondence between George and his

guardian had not ceased by any means: William had even written once or twice to her since his departure, but in a manner so unconstrainedly cold, that the poor woman felt now in her turn that she had lost her power over him, and that, as he had said, he was free. He had left her, and she was wretched. The memory of his almost countless services, and lofty and affectionate regard, now presented itself to her, and rebuked her day and night. She brooded over those recollections according to her wont; saw the purity and beauty of the affection with which she had trifled, and reproached herself for having flung away such a treasure.

It was gone indeed. William had spent it all out. He loved her no more, he thought, as he had loved her. He never could again. That sort of regard, which he had proffered to her for so many faithful years, can't be flung down and shattered, and mended so as to show no scars. The little heedless tyrant had so destroyed it. No, William thought again and again, "It was myself I deluded, and persisted in cajoling; had she been worthy of the love I gave her, she would have returned it long ago. It was a fond mistake. Isn't the whole course of life made up of such? and suppose I had won her, should I not have been disenchanted the day after my victory? Why pine, or be ashamed of my defeat?" The more he thought of this long passage of his life, the more clearly he saw his deception. "I'll go into harness again," he said, "and do my duty in that state of life in which it has pleased Heaven to place me. I will see that the buttons of the recruits are properly bright, and that the sergeants make no mistakes in their accounts. I will dine at mess, and listen to the Scotch surgeon telling his stories. When I am old and broken, I will go on half-pay, and my old sisters shall scold me. I have 'geliebt und gelebet' as the girl in *Wallenstein* says. I am done.—Pay the bills, and get me a cigar; find out what there is at the play to-night, Francis; to-morrow we cross by the 'Batavier.'" He made the above speech, whereof Francis only heard the last two lines, pacing up and down the Boompjes at Rotterdam. The 'Batavier'

was lying in the basin. He could see the place on the quarter-deck, where he and Emmy had sat on the happy voyage out. What had that little Mrs. Crawley to say to him? Psha! to-morrow we will put to sea, and return to England, home, and duty!

After June all the little Court Society of Pumpernickel used to separate, according to the German plan, and make for a hundred watering-places, where they drank at the wells; rode upon donkeys; gambled at the *redoutes*, if they had money and a mind; rushed with hundreds of their kind, to gormandise at the *tables-d'hôte;* and idled away the summer. The English diplomatists went off to Töplitz and Kissingen, their French rivals shut up their *chancellerie* and whisked away to their darling Boulevard de Gand. The Transparent reigning family took, too, to the waters, or retired to their hunting-lodges. Everybody went away having any pretensions to politeness, and, of course, with them, Doctor von Glauber, the Court Doctor, and his Baroness. The seasons for the baths were the most productive periods of the Doctor's practice—he united business with pleasure, and his chief place of resort was Ostend, which is much frequented by Germans, and where the Doctor treated himself and his spouse to what he called a "dib" in the sea.

His interesting patient, Jos, was a regular milch-cow to the Doctor, and he easily persuaded the Civilian, both for his own health's sake and that of his charming sister, which was really very much shattered, to pass the summer at that hideous seaport town. Emmy did not care where she went much. Georgy jumped at the idea of a move. As for Becky, she came as a matter of course in the fourth place inside of the fine barouche Mr. Jos had bought; the two domestics being on the box in front. She might have some misgivings about the friends whom she should meet at Ostend, and who might be likely to tell ugly stories—but, bah! she was strong enough to hold her own. She had cast such an anchor in Jos now as would require a strong storm to shake. That incident of the picture had finished him.

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Becky took down her elephant, and put it into the little box which she had had from Amelia ever so many years ago. Emmy also came off with her Lares,—her two pictures,—and the party, finally, were lodged in an exceedingly dear and uncomfortable house at Ostend.

There Amelia began to take baths, and get what good she could from them, and though scores of people of Becky's acquaintance passed her and cut her, yet Mrs. Osborne, who walked about with her, and who knew nobody, was not aware of the treatment experienced by the friend whom she had chosen so judiciously as a companion; indeed, Becky never thought fit to tell her what was passing under her innocent eyes.

Some of Mrs. Rawdon Crawley's acquaintances, however, acknowledged her readily enough,—perhaps more readily than she would have desired. Among these were Major Loder (unattached), and Captain Rook (late of the Rifles), who might be seen any day on the Dyke, smoking and staring at the women, and who speedily got an introduction to the hospitable board and select circle of Mr. Joseph Sedley. In fact, they would take no denial; they burst into the house whether Becky was at home or not, walked into Mrs. Osborne's drawing-room, which they perfumed with their coats and mustachios, called Jos "Old Buck," and invaded his dinner-table, and laughed and drank for long hours there.

"What can they mean?" asked Georgy, who did not like these gentlemen. "I heard the Major say to Mrs. Crawley yesterday, 'No, no, Becky, you shan't keep the old buck to yourself. We must have the bones in, or, dammy, I'll split.' What could the Major mean, Mamma."

"Major! don't call *him* Major!" Emmy said. "I'm sure I can't tell what he meant." His presence and that of his friends inspired the little lady with intolerable terror and aversion. They paid her tipsy compliments; they leered at her over the dinner-table. And the Captain made her advances that filled her with sickening dismay, nor would she ever see him unless she had George by her side.

Rebecca, to do her justice, never would let either of these men remain alone with Amelia; the Major was disengaged too, and swore he would be the winner of her. A couple of ruffians were fighting for this innocent creature, gambling for her at her own table; and though she was not aware of the rascals' designs upon her, yet she felt a horror and uneasiness in their presence, and longed to fly.

She besought, she entreated Jos to go. Not he. He was slow of movement, tied to his Doctor, and perhaps to some other leading-strings. At least Becky was not anxious to go to England.

At last she took a great resolution—made the great plunge. She wrote off a letter to a friend whom she had on the other side of the water; a letter about which she did not speak a word to anybody, which she carried herself to the post under her shawl, nor was any remark made about it; only that she looked very much flushed and agitated when Georgy met her; and she kissed him and hung over him a great deal that night. She did not come out of her room after her return from her walk. Becky thought it was Major Loder and the Captain who frightened her.

"She mustn't stop here," Becky reasoned with herself. "She must go away, the silly little fool. She is still whimpering after that gaby of a husband—dead (and served right!) these fifteen years. She shan't marry either of these men. It's too bad of Loder. No; she shall marry the bamboo-cane, I'll settle it this very night."

So Becky took a cup of tea to Amelia in her private apartment, and found that lady in the company of her miniatures, and in a most melancholy and nervous condition. She laid down the cup of tea.

"Thank you," said Amelia.

"Listen to me, Amelia," said Becky, marching up and down the room before the other, and surveying her with a sort of contemptuous kindness. "I want to talk to you. You must go away from here and from the impertinences of these men. I won't have you harassed by

them: and they will insult you if you stay. I tell you they are rascals; men fit to send to the hulks. Never mind how I know them. I know everybody. Jos can't protect you, he is too weak, and wants a protector himself. You are no more fit to live in the world than a baby in arms. You must marry, or you and your precious boy will go to ruin. You must have a husband, you fool; and one of the best gentlemen I ever saw was offered you a hundred times, and you have rejected him, you silly, heartless, ungrateful little creature."

"I tried—I tried my best, indeed I did, Rebecca," said Amelia, deprecatingly, "but I couldn't forget—;" and she finished the sentence by looking up at the portrait.

"Couldn't forget *him!*" cried out Becky; "that selfish humbug, that low-bred cockney dandy, that padded booby, who had neither wit, nor manners, nor heart, and was no more to be compared to your friend with the bamboo cane than you are to Queen Elizabeth. Why, the man was weary of you, and would have jilted you, but that Dobbin forced him to keep his word. He owned it to me. He never cared for you. He used to sneer about you to me, time after time; and made love to me the week after he married you."

"It's false! It's false! Rebecca," cried out Amelia, starting up.

"Look there, you fool," Becky said, still with provoking good-humour; and taking a little paper out of her belt, she opened it and flung it into Emmy's lap. "You know his hand-writing. He wrote that to me—wanted me to run away with him—gave it me under your nose, the day before he was shot—and served him right!" Becky repeated.

Emmy did not hear her; she was looking at the letter. It was that which George had put into the bouquet and given to Becky on the night of the Duke of Richmond's ball. It was as she said: the foolish young man had asked her to fly.

Emmy's head sank down, and for almost the last time in which she shall be called upon to weep in this history,

she commenced that work. Her head fell to her bosom, and her hands went up to her eyes; and there for a while, she gave way to her emotions, as Becky stood on and regarded her. Who shall analyse those tears, and say whether they were sweet or bitter? Was she most grieved, because the idol of her life was tumbled down and shivered at her feet, or indignant that her love had been so despised, or glad because the barrier was removed which modesty had placed between her and a new, a real affection? "There is nothing to forbid me now," she thought. "I may love him with all my heart now. Oh, I will, I will, if he will but let me, and forgive me." I believe it was this feeling rushed over all the others which agitated that gentle little bosom.

Indeed she did not cry so much as Becky expected—the other soothed and kissed her—a rare mark of sympathy with Mrs. Becky. She treated Emmy like a child, and patted her head. "And now let us get pen and ink, and write to him to come this minute," she said.

"I—I wrote to him this morning," Emmy said, blushing exceedingly. Becky screamed with laughter—"*Un biglietto*," she sang out with Rosina, "*eccolo quà!*"—the whole house echoed with her shrill singing.

Two mornings after this little scene, although the day was rainy and gusty, and Amelia had had an exceedingly wakeful night, listening to the wind roaring, and pitying all travellers by land and by water, yet she got up early, and insisted upon taking a walk on the Dyke with Georgy; and there she paced as the rain beat into her face, and she looked out westward across the dark sea-line, and over the swollen billows which came tumbling and frothing to the shore. Neither spoke much, except now and then, when the boy said a few words to his timid companion, indicative of sympathy and protection.

"I hope he won't cross in such weather," Emmy said.

"I bet ten to one he does," the boy answered. "Look,

mother, there 's the smoke of the steamer." It was that signal, sure enough.

But though the steamer was under weigh, he might not be on board: he might not have got the letter; he might not choose to come. A hundred fears poured one over the other into the little heart, as fast as the waves on to the dyke.

The boat followed the smoke into sight. Georgy had a dandy telescope, and got the vessel under view in the most skilful manner. And he made appropriate nautical comments upon the manner of the approach of the steamer as she came nearer and nearer, dipping and rising in the water. The signal of an English steamer in sight went fluttering up to the mast on the pier. I daresay Mrs. Amelia's heart was in a similar flutter.

Emmy tried to look through the telescope over George's shoulder, but she could make nothing of it She only saw a black eclipse bobbing up and down before her eyes.

George took the glass again and raked the vessel. "How she does pitch!" he said. "There goes a wave slap over her bows. There 's only two people on deck besides the steersman. There 's a man laying down, and a—chap in a—cloak with a——Hooray!—It 's Dob, by jingo!" He clapped-to the telescope and flung his arms round his mother. As for that lady, let us say what she did in the words of a favourite poet—δακρυόεν γελάσασα. She was sure it was William. It could be no other. What she had said about hoping that he would not come was all hypocrisy. Of course he would come: what could he do else but come? She knew he would come.

The ship came swiftly nearer and nearer. As they went in to meet her at the landing-place at the quay, Emmy's knees trembled so that she scarcely could run. She would have liked to kneel down and say her prayers of thanks there. Oh, she thought, she would be all her life saying them!

It was such a bad day that as the vessel came alongside of the quay there were no idlers abroad; scarcely

even a commissioner on the look-out for the few passengers in the steamer. That young scapegrace, George, had fled too: and as the gentleman in the old cloak lined with red stuff stepped on to the shore, there was scarcely any one present to see what took place, which was briefly this:

A lady in a dripping white bonnet and shawl, with her two little hands out before her, went up to him, and in the next minute she had altogether disappeared under the folds of the old cloak, and was kissing one of his hands with all her might; whilst the other, I suppose, was engaged in holding her to his heart (which her head just about reached), and in preventing her from tumbling down. She was murmuring something about—Forgive—dear William—dear, dear, dearest friend—kiss, kiss, kiss, and so forth—and in fact went on under the cloak in an absurd manner.

When Emmy emerged from it, she still kept tight hold of one of William's hands, and looked up in his face. It was full of sadness and tender love and pity. She understood its reproach, and hung down her head.

"It was time you sent for me, dear Amelia," he said.

"You will never go again, William?"

"No, never," he answered; and pressed the dear little soul once more to his heart.

As they issued out of the Custom-house precincts, Georgy broke out on them, with his telescope up to his eye, and a loud laugh of welcome; he danced round the couple, and performed many facetious antics as he led them up to the house. Jos wasn't up yet; Becky not visible (though she looked at them through the blinds). Georgy ran off to see about breakfast. Emmy, whose shawl and bonnet were off in the passage in the hands of Mrs. Payne, now went to undo the clasp of William's cloak, and—we will, if you please, go with George and look after breakfast for the Colonel. The vessel is in port. He has got the prize he has been trying for all his life. The bird has come in at last. There it is with its head on his shoulder, billing and cooing close up to his heart, with soft outstretched fluttering wings. This is

what he has asked for every day and hour for eighteen years. This is what he pined after. Here it is—the summit, the end—the last page of the third volume. Good-bye, Colonel—God bless you, honest William!—Farewell, dear Amelia—Grow green again, tender little parasite, round the rugged old oak to which you cling!

PENDENNIS

[Helen Pendennis, the widow of a country physician and apothecary of good family but small worldly success, lives a retired and religious life in the country, entirely devoted to her son Arthur. She has, however, great confidence in the worldly wisdom of the boy's uncle, Major Pendennis, a gravely and punctiliously frivolous man about town, who contrives to live in the highest society on comparatively slender means. When, therefore, Arthur falls madly in love with an actress, Miss Fotheringay or Costigan, the daughter of Captain Costigan, an amiable and intoxicated Irish adventurer, the widow has no other choice than to send for the Major, although his cynicism may be almost as little to her taste as the suicidal idealism of the young lover. The Major is much too wary to bully Pendennis; he trusts to his honour and keeps his own eyes open for developments. The scene which follows describes how the Major gained information from one of Arthur's schoolfellows, and then brought matters to a crisis with the Costigans.]

MAJOR PENDENNIS AND CAPTAIN COSTIGAN

(Chapters X, XI)

Sauntering homewards, Major Pendennis reached the hotel presently, and found Mr. Morgan, his faithful valet, awaiting him at the door, who stopped his master as he was about to take a candle to go to bed, and said, with his usual air of knowing deference, "I think, sir, if you would go into the coffee-room, there's a young gentleman there as you would like to see."

"What, is Mr. Arthur here?" the Major said, in great anger.

"No, sir—but his great friend, Mr. Foker, sir. Lady Hagnes Foker's son is here, sir. He's been asleep in the coffee-room since he took his dinner, and has just rung for his coffee, sir. And I think, p'raps, you might

like to git into conversation with him," the valet said, opening the coffee-room door.

The Major entered; and there indeed was Mr. Foker, the only occupant of the place. He had intended to go to the play too, but sleep had overtaken him after a copious meal, and he had flung up his legs on the bench, and indulged in a nap instead of the dramatic amusement. The Major was meditating how to address the young man, but the latter prevented him that trouble.

"Like to look at the evening paper, sir?" said Mr. Foker, who was always communicative and affable; and he took up the *Globe* from his table, and offered it to the new comer.

"I am very much obliged to you," said the Major, with a grateful bow and smile. "If I don't mistake the family likeness, I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Henry Foker, Lady Agnes Foker's son. I have the happiness to name her ladyship among my acquaintances, and you bear, sir, a Rosherville face."

"Hullo! I beg your pardon," Mr. Foker said, "I took you"—he was going to say—"I took you for a commercial gent." But he stopped that phrase. "To whom have I the pleasure of speaking?" he added.

"To a relative of a friend and schoolfellow of yours—Arthur Pendennis, my nephew, who has often spoken to me about you in terms of great regard. I am Major Pendennis, of whom you may have heard him speak. May I take my soda-water at your table? I have had the pleasure of sitting at your grandfather's."

"Sir, you do me proud," said Mr. Foker, with much courtesy. "And so you are Arthur Pendennis's uncle, are you?"

"And guardian," added the Major.

"He 's as good a fellow as ever stepped, sir," said Mr. Foker.

"I'm glad you think so."

"And clever, too—I was always a stupid chap, I was—but you see, sir, I know 'em when they are clever, and like 'em of that sort."

"You show your taste and your modesty, too," said

the Major. "I have heard Arthur repeatedly speak of you, and he said your talents were very good."

"I'm not good at the books," Mr. Foker said, wagging his head—"never could manage that—Pendennis could—he used to do half the chaps' verses—and yet you are his guardian; and I hope you will pardon me for saying that I think he's what *we* call a flat," the candid young gentleman said.

The Major found himself on the instant in the midst of a most interesting and confidential conversation. "And how is Arthur a flat?" he asked, with a smile.

"You know," Foker answered, winking at him—he would have winked at the Duke of Wellington with just as little scruple. "You know Arthur's a flat,—about women I mean."

"He is not the first of us, my dear Mr. Harry," answered the Major. "I have heard something of this—but pray tell me more."

"Why, sir, you see—it's partly my fault. We went to the play one night, and Pen was struck all of a heap with Miss Fotheringay,—Costigan her real name is—an uncommon fine gal she is too; and the next morning I introduced him to the General, as we call her father—a regular old scamp—and *such* a boy for the whisky-and-water!—and he's gone on being intimate there. And he's fallen in love with her—and I'm blessed if he hasn't proposed to her," Foker said, slapping his hand on the table, until all the dessert began to jingle.

"What! you know it too?" asked the Major.

"Know it! don't I? and many more too. We were talking about it at mess, yesterday, and chaffing Derby Oaks—until he was as mad as a hatter. Know Sir Derby Oaks? We dined together, and he went to the play: we were standing at the door smoking, I remember, when you passed in to dinner."

"I remember Sir Thomas Oaks, his father, before he was a Baronet or a Knight; he lived in Cavendish Square, and was Physician to Queen Charlotte."

"The young one is making the money spin, I can tell you," Mr. Foker said.

"And is Sir Derby Oaks," the Major said, with great delight and anxiety, "another *soupirant*?"

"Another *what*?" inquired Mr. Foker.

"Another admirer of Miss Fotheringay?"

"Lord bless you! we call him Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Pen Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. But mind you, nothing wrong! No, no! Miss F. is a deal too wide awake for that, Major Pendennis. She plays one off against the other. What you call two strings to her bow."

"I think you seem tolerably wide awake, too, Mr. Foker," Pendennis said laughing.

"Pretty well, thank you, sir—how are you?" Foker replied imperturbably. "I'm not clever, p'raps: but I *am* rather downy; and partial friends say I know what's o'clock tolerably well. Can I tell you the time of day in any way?"

"Upon my word," the Major answered, quite delighted, "I think you may be of very great service to me. You are a young man of the world, and with such one likes to deal. And as such I need not inform you that our family is by no means delighted at this absurd intrigue in which Arthur is engaged."

"I should rather think not," said Mr. Foker. "Connection not eligible. Too much beer drunk on the premises. No Irish need apply. That I take to be your meaning."

The Major said it was, exactly: and he proceeded to examine his new acquaintance regarding the amiable family into which his nephew proposed to enter, and soon got from the candid witness a number of particulars regarding the House of Costigan.

We must do Mr. Foker the justice to say that he spoke most favourably of Mr. and Miss Costigan's moral character. "You see," said he, "I think the General is fond of the jovial bowl, and if I wanted to be very certain of my money, it isn't in his pocket I'd invest it—but he has always kept a watchful eye on his daughter, and neither he nor she will stand anything but what's honourable. Pen's attentions to her are talked

about in the whole Company, and I hear all about them from a young lady who used to be very intimate with her, and with whose family I sometimes take tea in a friendly way. Miss Rouncy says, Sir Derby Oaks has been hanging about Miss Fotheringay ever since his regiment has been down here; but Pen has come in and cut him out lately, which has made the Baronet so mad, that he has been very near on the point of proposing too. Wish he would; and you'd see which of the two Miss Fotheringay would jump at."

"I thought as much," the Major said. "You give me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Foker. I wish I could have seen you before."

"Didn't like to put in my oar," replied the other. "Don't speak till I'm asked, when, if there 's no objections, I speak pretty freely. Heard your man had been hankering about my servant—didn't know myself what was going on until Miss Fotheringay and Miss Rouncy had the row about the ostrich feathers, when Miss R. told me everything."

"Miss Rouncy, I gather, was the confidante of the other."

"Confidant? I believe you. Why, she 's twice as clever a girl as Fotheringay, and literary and that, while Miss Foth can't do much more than read."

"She can write," said the Major, remembering Pen's breast-pocket.

Foker broke out into a sardonic "He, he! Rouncy writes her letters," he said: "every one of 'em; and since they've quarrelled, she don't know how the deuce to get on. Miss Rouncy is an uncommon pretty hand, whereas the other one makes dreadful work of the writing and spelling when Bows ain't by. Rouncy 's been settin' her copies lately—she writes a beautiful hand, Rouncy does."

"I suppose you know it pretty well," said the Major, archly: upon which Mr. Foker winked at him again.

"I would give a great deal to have a specimen of her handwriting," continued Major Pendennis, "I dare say you could give me one."

"That would be too bad," Foker replied. "Miss F.'s writin' ain't so *very* bad, I dare say; only she got Miss R. to write the first letter, and has gone on ever since. But you mark my word, that till they are friends again the letters will stop."

"I hope they will never be reconciled," the Major said with great sincerity. "You must feel, my dear sir, as a man of the world, how fatal to my nephew's prospects in life is this step which he contemplates, and how eager we all must be to free him from this absurd engagement."

"He has come out uncommon strong," said Mr. Foker; "I have seen his verses; Rouncy copied 'em. And I said to myself when I saw 'em, 'Catch *me* writin' verses to a woman,—that's all."

"He has made a fool of himself, as many a good fellow has before him. How can we make him see his folly, and cure it? I am sure you will give us what aid you can in extricating a generous young man from such a pair of schemers as this father and daughter seem to be. Love on the lady's side is out of the question."

"Love, indeed!" Foker said. "If Pen hadn't two thousand a-year when he came of age——"

"If Pen hadn't *what*?" cried out the Major in astonishment.

"Two thousand a-year: hasn't he got two thousand a-year?—the General says he has."

"My dear friend," shrieked out the Major, with an eagerness which this gentleman rarely showed, "thank you!—thank you!—I begin to see now.—Two thousand a-year! Why, his mother has but five hundred a-year in the world.—She is likely to live to eighty, and Arthur has not a shilling but what she can allow him."

"What! he ain't rich then?" Foker asked.

"Upon my honour he has no more than what I say."

"And you ain't going to leave him anything?"

The Major had sunk every shilling he could scrape together on an annuity, and of course was going to leave Pen nothing; but he did not tell Foker this. "How much do you think a Major on half-pay can

save?" he asked. "If these people have been looking at him as a fortune, they are utterly mistaken—and—and you have made me the happiest man in the world."

"Sir to you," said Mr. Foker, politely, and when they parted for the night they shook hands with the greatest cordiality; the younger gentleman promising the elder not to leave Chatteris without a further conversation in the morning. And as the Major went up to his room, and Mr. Foker smoked his cigar against the door pillars of the George, Pen, very likely, ten miles off, was lying in bed kissing the letter from his Emily.

The next morning, before Mr. Foker drove off in his drag, the insinuating Major had actually got a letter of Miss Rouncy's in his own pocket-book. Let it be a lesson to women how they write. And in very high spirits Major Pendennis went to call upon Doctor Portman at the Deanery, and told him what happy discoveries he had made on the previous night. As they sate in confidential conversation in the Dean's oak breakfast parlour they could look across the lawn and see Captain Costigan's window, at which poor Pen had been only too visible some three weeks since. The Doctor was most indignant against Mrs. Creed, the landlady, for her duplicity, in concealing Sir Derby Oaks' constant visits to her lodgers, and threatened to excommunicate her out of the Cathedral. But the wary Major thought that all things were for the best; and, having taken counsel with himself overnight, felt himself quite strong enough to go and face Captain Costigan.

"I'm going to fight the dragon," he said, with a laugh, to Doctor Portman.

"And I shrive you, sir, and bid good fortune go with you," answered the Doctor. Perhaps he and Mrs. Portman and Miss Mira, as they sat with their friend, the Dean's lady, in her drawing-room, looked up more than once at the enemy's window to see if they could perceive any signs of the combat.

The Major walked round, according to the directions given him, and soon found Mrs. Creed's little door. He passed it, and as he ascended to Captain Costigan's

apartment, he could hear a stamping of feet, and a great shouting of "Ha, ha!" within.

"It's Sir Derby Oaks taking his fencing lesson," said the child, who piloted Major Pendennis. "He takes it Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays."

The Major knocked, and at length a tall gentleman came forth, with a foil and mask in one hand, and a fencing glove on the other.

Pendennis made him a deferential bow. "I believe I have the honour of speaking to Captain Costigan—My name is Major Pendennis."

The Captain brought his weapon up to the salute, and said, "Major, the honer is moine; I'm deloighted to see ye."

The Major and Captain Costigan were old soldiers and accustomed to face the enemy, so we may presume that they retained their presence of mind perfectly: but the rest of the party assembled in Cos's sitting-room were, perhaps, a little flurried at Pendennis's apparition. Miss Fotheringay's slow heart began to beat no doubt, for her cheek flushed up with a great healthy blush, as Lieutenant Sir Derby Oaks looked at her with a scowl. The little crooked old man in the window-seat, who had been witnessing the fencing-match between the two gentlemen (whose stamping and jumping had been such as to cause him to give up all attempts to continue writing the theatre music, in the copying of which he had been engaged) looked up eagerly towards the new comer as the Major of the well-blacked boots entered the apartment, distributing the most graceful bows to everybody present.

"Me daughter—me friend, Mr. Bows—me gallant young pupil and friend, I may call 'um, Sir Derby Oaks," said Costigan, splendidly waving his hand, and pointing each of these individuals to the Major's attention. "In one moment, Meejor, I'm your humble servant," and to dash into the little adjoining chamber where he slept, to give a twist to his lank hair with his hair-brush (a won-

derful and ancient piece), to tear off his old stock and put on a new one which Emily had constructed for him, and to assume a handsome clean collar, and the new coat which had been ordered upon the occasion of Miss Fotheringay's benefit, was with the still active Costigan the work of a minute.

After him Sir Derby entered, and presently emerged from the same apartment, where he also cased himself in his little shell-jacket, which fitted tightly upon the young officer's big person; and which he and Miss Fotheringay, and poor Pen, too, perhaps, admired prodigiously.

Meanwhile conversation was engaged in between the actress and the new comer; and the usual remarks about the weather had been interchanged before Costigan re-entered in his new "shoot," as he called it.

"I needn't apologoise to ye, Meejor," he said, in his richest and most courteous manner, "for receiving ye in me shirt-sleeves."

"An old soldier can't be better employed than in teaching a young one the use of his sword," answered the Major, gallantly. "I remember in old times hearing that you could use yours pretty well, Captain Costigan."

"What, ye've heard of Jack Costigan, Major," said the other, greatly.

The Major had, indeed; he had pumped his nephew concerning his new friend, the Irish officer; and said that he perfectly well recollected meeting Mr. Costigan, and hearing him sing at Sir Richard Strachan's table at Walcheren.

At this information, and the bland and cordial manner in which it was conveyed, Bows looked up, entirely puzzled. "But we will talk of these matters another time," the Major continued, perhaps not wishing to commit himself; "it is to Miss Fotheringay that I came to pay my respects to-day:" and he performed another bow for her, so courtly and gracious, that if she had been a Duchess he could not have made it more handsome.

"I had heard of your performances from my nephew, madam," the Major said, "who raves about you, as I believe you know pretty well. But Arthur is but a boy, and a wild enthusiastic young fellow, whose opinions one must not take *au pied de la lettre*; and I confess I was anxious to judge for myself. Permit me to say your performance delighted and astonished me. I have seen our best actresses, and, on my word, I think you surpass them all. You are as majestic as Mrs. Siddons."

"Faith, I always said so," Costigan said, winking at his daughter: "Major, take a chair." Milly rose at this hint, took an unripped satin garment off the only vacant seat, and brought the latter to Major Pendennis with one of her finest curtseys.

"You are as pathetic as Miss O'Neill," he continued, bowing and seating himself; "your snatches of song remind me of Mrs. Jordan in her best time, when we were young men, Captain Costigan; and your manner reminded me of Mars. Did you ever see the Mars, Miss Fotheringay?"

"There was two Mahers in Crow Street," remarked Miss Emily: "Fanny was well enough, but Biddy was no great things."

"Sure, the Major means the god of war, Milly, my dear," interposed the parent.

"It is not that Mars I meant, though Venus, I suppose, may be pardoned for thinking about him;" the Major replied with a smile directed in full to Sir Derby Oaks, who now re-entered in his shell-jacket, but the lady did not understand the words of which he made use, nor did the compliment at all pacify Sir Derby, who, probably, did not understand it either, and at any rate received it with great sulkiness and stiffness; scowling uneasily at Miss Fotheringay, with an expression which seemed to ask what the deuce does this man here?

Major Pendennis was not in the least annoyed by the gentleman's ill-humour. On the contrary, it delighted him. "So," thought he, "a rival is in the field;" and he offered up vows that Sir Derby might be, not only a

rival, but a winner too, in this love-match in which he and Pen were engaged.

"I fear I interrupted your fencing lesson; but my stay in Chatteris is very short, and I was anxious to make myself known to my old fellow-campaigner Captain Costigan, and to see a lady nearer who had charmed me so much from the stage. I was not the only man *épris* last night, Miss Fotheringay (if I must call you so, though your own family name is a very ancient and noble one). There was a reverend friend of mine, who went home in raptures with Ophelia; and I saw Sir Derby Oaks fling a bouquet which no actress ever merited better. I should have brought one myself, had I known what I was going to see. Are not those the very flowers in a glass of water on the mantelpiece yonder?"

"I am very fond of flowers," said Miss Fotheringay, with a languishing ogle at Sir Derby Oaks—but the Baronet still scowled sulkily.

"Sweets to the sweet—isn't that the expression of the play?" Major Pendennis asked, bent upon being good-humoured.

"'Pon my life, I don't know. Very likely it is. I ain't much of a literary man," answered Sir Derby.

"Is it possible?" the Major continued, with an air of surprise. "You don't inherit your father's love of letters, then, Sir Derby? He was a remarkably fine scholar, and I had the honour of knowing him very well."

"Indeed," said the other, and gave a sulky wag of his head.

"He saved my life," continued Pendennis.

"Did he now?" cried Miss Fotheringay, rolling her eyes first upon the Major with surprise, then towards Sir Derby with gratitude—but the latter was proof against those glances; and far from appearing to be pleased that the Apothecary, his father, should have saved Major Pendennis's life, the young man actually looked as if he wished the event had turned the other way.

"My father, I believe, was a very good doctor," the

young gentleman said by way of reply. "I'm not in that line myself. I wish you good morning, sir. I've got an appointment—Cos, bye-bye—Miss Fotheringay, good morning." And, in spite of the young lady's imploring looks and appealing smiles, the Dragoon bowed stiffly out of the room, and the clatter of his sabre was heard as he strode down the creaking stair; and the angry tones of his voice as he cursed little Tom Creed, who was disporting in the passage, and whose peg-top Sir Derby kicked away with an oath into the street.

The Major did not smile in the least, though he had every reason to be amused. "Monstrous handsome young man that—as fine a looking soldier as ever I saw," he said to Costigan.

"A credit to the army and to human nature in general," answered Costigan. "A young man of refoined manners, polite affabilitee, and princely fortune. His table is sumptuous: he 's adawr'd in the regiment: and he rides sixteen stone."

"A perfect champion," said the Major, laughing. "I have no doubt all the ladies admire him."

"He 's very well, in spite of his weight, now he 's young," said Milly; "but he 's no conversation."

"He 's best on horseback," Mr. Bows said; on which Milly replied, that the Baronet had ridden third in the steeple-chase on his horse Tareaways, and the Major began to comprehend that the young lady herself was not of a particular genius, and to wonder how she should be so stupid and act so well.

Costigan, with Irish hospitality, of course pressed refreshment upon his guest: and the Major, who was no more hungry than you are after a Lord Mayor's dinner, declared that he should like a biscuit and a glass of wine above all things, as he felt quite faint from long fasting —but he knew that to receive small kindnesses flatters the donors very much, and that people must needs grow well disposed towards you as they give you their hospitality.

"Some of the old Madara, Milly, love," Costigan said, winking to his child—and that lady, turning to

her father a glance of intelligence, went out of the room, and down the stair, where she softly summoned her little emissary Master Tommy Creed: and giving him a piece of money, ordered him to go buy a pint of Madara wine at the Grapes, and sixpennyworth of sorted biscuits at the baker's, and to return in a hurry, when he might have two biscuits for himself.

Whilst Tommy Creed was gone on this errand, Miss Costigan sat below with Mrs. Creed, telling her landlady how Mr. Arthur Pendennis's uncle, the Major, was above stairs; a nice, soft-spoken old gentleman; that butter wouldn't melt in his mouth: and how Sir Derby had gone out of the room in a rage of jealousy, and thinking what must be done to pacify both of them.

"She keeps the keys of the cellar, Major," said Mr. Costigan, as the girl left the room.

"Upon my word you have a very beautiful butler," answered Pendennis, gallantly, "and I don't wonder at the young fellows raving about her. When we were of their age, Captain Costigan, I think plainer women would have done our business."

"Faith, and ye may say that, sir—and lucky is the man who gets her. Ask me friend Bob Bows here whether Miss Fotheringay's moind is not even shuparior to her person, and whether she does not possess a cultiveated intellect, a refoined understanding, and an emiable disposition?"

"O, of course," said Mr. Bows, rather drily. "Here comes Hebe blushing from the cellar. Don't you think it is time to go to rehearsal, Miss Hebe? You will be fined if you are late"—and he gave the young lady a look, which intimated that they had much better leave the room and the two elders together.

At this order Miss Hebe took up her bonnet and shawl, looking uncommonly pretty, good-humoured, and smiling: and Bows gathered up his roll of papers, and hobbled across the room for his hat and cane.

"Must you go?" said the Major. "Can't you give us a few minutes more, Miss Fotheringay? Before you

leave us, permit an old fellow to shake you by the hand, and believe that I am proud to have the honour of making your acquaintance, and am most sincerely anxious to be your friend."

Miss Fotheringay made a low curtsey at the conclusion of this gallant speech, and the Major followed her retreating steps to the door, where he squeezed her hand with the kindest and most paternal pressure. Bows was puzzled with this exhibition of cordiality: "The lad's relatives can't be really wanting to marry him to her," he thought—and so they departed.

"Now for it," thought Major Pendennis; and as for Mr. Costigan he profited instantaneously by his daughter's absence to drink up the rest of the wine; and tossed off one bumper after another of the Madeira from the Grapes, with an eager shaking hand. The Major came up to the table, and took up his glass and drained it with a jovial smack. If it had been Lord Steyne's particular, and not public-house Cape, he could not have appeared to relish it more.

"Capital Madeira, Captain Costigan," he said. "Where do you get it? I drink the health of that charming creature in a bumper. Faith, Captain, I don't wonder that the men are wild about her. I never saw such eyes in my life, or such a grand manner. I am sure she is as intellectual as she is beautiful; and I have no doubt she is as good as she is clever."

"A good girl, sir,—a good girl, sir," said the delighted father; "and I pledge a toast to her with all my heart. Shall I send to the—to the cellar for another pint? It's handy by. No? Well, indeed, sir, ye may say she is a good girl, and the pride and glory of her father —honest old Jack Costigan. The man who gets her will have a jew'l to a wife, sir; and I drink his health, sir, and ye know who I mean, Major."

"I am not surprised at young or old falling in love with her," said the Major, "and frankly must tell you, that though I was very angry with my poor nephew Arthur, when I heard of the boy's passion—now I have seen the lady I can pardon him any extent of it. By

George, I should like to enter for the race myself, if I weren't an old fellow and a poor one."

"And no better man, Major, I'm sure," cried Jack enraptured. "Your friendship, sir, delights me. Your admiration for my girl brings tears to me eyes—tears, sir—manlee tears—and when she leaves me humble home for your own more splendid mansion, I hope she'll keep a place for her poor old father, poor old Jack Costigan."—The Captain suited the action to the word, and his blood-shot eyes were suffused with water, as he addressed the Major.

"Your sentiments do you honour," the other said. "But, Captain Costigan, I can't help smiling at one thing you have just said."

"And what 's that, sir?" asked Jack, who was at a too heroic and sentimental pitch to descend from it.

"You were speaking about our splendid mansion—my sister's house, I mean."

"I mane the park and mansion of Arthur Pendennis, Esquire, of Fairoaks Park, whom I hope to see a Mimber of Parliament for his native town of Clavering, when he is of ege to take that responsible stetion," cried the Captain with much dignity.

The Major smiled. "Fairoaks Park, my dear sir!" he said. "Do you know our history? We are of excessively ancient family certainly, but I began life with scarce enough money to purchase my commission, and my eldest brother was a country apothecary: who made every shilling he died possessed of out of his pestle and mortar."

"I have consented to waive that objection, sir," said Costigan majestically, "in consideration of the known respectability of your family."

"Curse your impudence," thought the Major; but he only smiled and bowed.

"The Costigans, too, have met with misfortunes; and our house of Castle Costigan is by no manes what it was. I have known very honest men apothecaries, sir, and there 's some in Dublin that has had the honour of dining at the Lord Leftenant's teeble."

"You are very kind to give us the benefit of your charity," the Major continued: "but permit me to say that is not the question. You spoke just now of my little nephew as heir of Fairoaks Park, and I don't know what besides."

"Funded property, I've no doubt, Meejor, and something handsome eventually from yourself."

"My good sir, I tell you the boy is the son of a country apothecary," cried out Major Pendennis, "and that when he comes of age he won't have a shilling."

"Pooh, Major, you're laughing at me," said Mr. Costigan, "me young friend, I make no doubt, is heir to two thousand pounds a-year."

"Two thousand fiddlesticks! I beg your pardon, my dear sir; but has the boy been humbugging you?—it is not his habit. Upon my word and honour, as a gentleman and an executor to my brother's will too, he left little more than five hundred a year behind him."

"And with aconomy, a handsome sum of money too, sir," the Captain answered. "Faith, I've known a man drink his clar't, and drive his coach-and-four on five hundred a-year and strict aconomy, in Ireland, sir. We'll manage on it, sir—trust Jack Costigan for that."

"My dear Captain Costigan—I give you my word that my brother did not leave a shilling to his son Arthur."

"Are ye joking with me, Meejor Pendennis?" cried Jack Costigan. "Are ye thrifling with the feelings of a father and a gentleman?"

"I am telling you the honest truth," said Major Pendennis. "Every shilling my brother had, he left to his widow: with a partial reversion, it is true, to the boy. But she is a young woman, and may marry if he offends her—or she may outlive him, for she comes of an uncommonly long-lived family. And I ask you, as a gentleman and a man of the world, what allowance can my sister, Mrs. Pendennis, make to her son out of five hundred a-year, which is all her fortune—that shall enable him to maintain himself and your daughter in the rank befitting such an accomplished young lady?"

"Am I to understand, sir, that the young gentleman, your nephew, and whom I have fosthered and cherished as the son of me bosom, is an imposther who has been thrifling with the affections of me beloved child?" exclaimed the General, with an outbreak of wrath. "Have a care, sir, how you thrifle with the honour of John Costigan. If I thought any mortal man meant to do so, be heavens I'd have his blood, sir—were he old or young."

"Mr. Costigan!" cried out the Major.

"Mr. Costigan can protect his own and his daughter's honour, and will, sir," said the other. "Look at that chest of dthrawers, it contains heaps of letters that that viper has addressed to that innocent child. There's promises there, sir, enough to fill a band-box with; and when I have dragged the scoundthrel before the Courts of Law, and shown up his perjury and his dishonour, I have another remedy in yondther mahogany case, sir, which shall set me right, sir, with any individual—ye mark me words, Major Pendennis—with any individual who has counselled your nephew to insult a soldier and a gentleman. What? Me daughter to be jilted, and me gray hairs dishonoured by an apothecary's son! By the laws of Heaven, sir, I should like to see the man that shall do it."

"I am to understand, then, that you threaten in the first place to publish the letters of a boy of eighteen to a woman of eight-and-twenty: and afterwards to do me the honour of calling me out," the Major said, still with perfect coolness.

"You have described my intentions with perfect accuracy, Meejor Pendennis," answered the Captain, as he pulled his ragged whiskers over his chin.

"Well, well; these shall be the subjects of future arrangements, but before we come to powder and ball, my good sir,—do have the kindness to think with yourself in what earthly way I have injured you? I have told you that my nephew is dependent upon his mother, who has scarcely more than five hundred a-year."

"I have my own opinion of the correctness of that assertion," said the Captain.

"Will you go to my sister's lawyers, Messrs. Tatham here, and satisfy yourself?"

"I decline to meet those gentlemen," said the Captain, with rather a disturbed air. "If it be as you say, I have been athrociously deceived by some one, and on that person I'll be revenged."

"Is it my nephew?" cried the Major, starting up and putting on his hat. "Did he ever tell you that his property was two thousand a-year? If he did, I'm mistaken in the boy. To tell lies has not been a habit in our family, Mr. Costigan, and I don't think my brother's son has learned it as yet. Try and consider whether you have not deceived yourself; or adopted extravagant reports from hearsay. As for me, sir, you are at liberty to understand that I am not afraid of all the Costigans in Ireland, and know quite well how to defend myself against any threats from any quarter. I come here as the boy's guardian to protest against a marriage, most absurd and unequal, that cannot but bring poverty and misery with it: and in preventing it I conceive I am quite as much your daughter's friend (who I have no doubt is an honourable young lady), as the friend of my own family: and prevent the marriage I will, sir, by every means in my power. There, I have said my say, sir."

"But I have not said mine, Major Pendennis—and ye shall hear more from me," Mr. Costigan said, with a look of tremendous severity.

"'Sdeath, sir, what do you mean?" the Major asked, turning round on the threshold of the door, and looking the intrepid Costigan in the face.

"Ye said, in the course of conversation, that ye were at the George Hotel, I think," Mr. Costigan said in a stately manner. "A friend shall wait upon ye there before ye leave town, sir."

"Let him make haste, Mr. Costigan," cried out the Major, almost beside himself with rage. "I wish you a good morning, sir." And Captain Costigan bowed a magnificent bow of defiance to Major Pendennis over the landing-place as the latter retreated down the stairs.

PENDENNIS AND WARRINGTON

(From Chapter LXI)

[Thackeray was much concerned with philosophy, though never quite sufficiently to make it clear and complete. Any selection, however, from such a book as *Pendennis* would be incomplete which did not give an example of his love of philosophic dialogue, though with him perhaps, as with many other men, dialogue is only another name for doubt. On joining the fraternity of the Temple, Arthur Pendennis makes a friend of George Warrington, a brilliant yet obscure Bohemian, who has been a great name at Oxbridge, and ever afterwards a powerful but anonymous journalist. The contrast between his bitter idealism and the cheery back-slapping pessimism of Pendennis, is as well suggested in the following dialogue as in any other detachable page of the book. Pendennis intends, on the advice of his worldly uncle, to marry the daughter of the rich Lady Clavering.]

On coming into his property, Arthur Pendennis at first comported himself with a modesty and equanimity which obtained his friend Warrington's praises, though Arthur's uncle was a little inclined to quarrel with his nephew's meanness of spirit, for not assuming greater state and pretensions now that he had entered on the enjoyment of his kingdom. He would have had Arthur installed in handsome quarters, and riding on showy park hacks, or in well-built cabriolets, every day. "I am too absent," Arthur said, with a laugh, "to drive a cab in London; the omnibuses would cut me in two, or I should send my horse's head into the ladies' carriage-windows; and you wouldn't have me driven about by my servant like an apothecary, uncle?" No, Major Pendennis would on no account have his nephew appear like an apothecary; the august representative of the house of Pendennis must not so demean himself. And when Arthur, pursuing his banter, said, "And yet, I dare say, sir, my father was proud enough when he first set up his gig," the old Major hemmed and ha'd, and his wrinkled face reddened with a blush as he answered, "You know what Bonaparte said, sir, '*Il faut laver son linge sale en famille.*'

There is no need, sir, for you to brag that your father was a—a medical man. He came of a most ancient but fallen house, and was obliged to reconstruct the family fortunes, as many a man of good family has done before him. You are like the fellow in Sterne, sir—the Marquis who came to demand his sword again. Your father got back yours for you. You are a man of landed estate, by Gad, sir, and a gentleman—never forget you are a gentleman."

Then Arthur slily turned on his uncle the argument which he had heard the old gentleman often use regarding himself. "In the society which I have the honour of frequenting through your introduction, who cares to ask about my paltry means or my humble gentility, uncle?" he asked. "It would be absurd of me to attempt to compete with the great folks; and all that they can ask from us is, that we should have a decent address and good manners."

"But for all that, sir, I should belong to a better Club or two," the uncle answered: "I should give an occasional dinner, and select my society well; and I should come out of that horrible garret in the Temple, sir." And so Arthur compromised, by descending to the second floor in Lamb Court: Warrington still occupying his old quarters, and the two friends being determined not to part one from the other. Cultivate, kindly reader, those friendships of your youth: it is only in that generous time that they are formed. How different the intimacies of after days are, and how much weaker the grasp of your own hand after it has been shaken about in twenty years' commerce with the world, and has squeezed and dropped a thousand equally careless palms! As you can seldom fashion your tongue to speak a new language after twenty, the heart refuses to receive friendship pretty soon: it gets too hard to yield to the impression.

So Pen had many acquaintances, and being of a jovial and easy turn, got more daily: but no friend like Warrington; and the two men continued to live almost as much in common as the Knights of the Temple, riding upon one horse (for Pen's was at Warrington's ser-

vice), and having their chambers and their servitor in common.

Mr. Warrington had made the acquaintance of Pen's friends of Grosvenor Place during their last unlucky season in London, and had expressed himself no better satisfied with Sir Francis and Lady Clavering and her ladyship's daughter than was the public in general. "The world is right," George said, "about those people. The young men laugh and talk freely before those ladies and about them. The girl sees people whom she has no right to know, and talks to men with whom no girl should have an intimacy. Did you see those two reprobates leaning over Lady Clavering's carriage in the Park the other day, and leering under Miss Blanche's bonnet? No good mother would let her daughter know those men, or admit them within her doors."

"The Begum is the most innocent and good-natured soul alive," interposed Pen. "She never heard any harm of Captain Blackball, or read that trial in which Charley Lovelace figures. Do you suppose that honest ladies read and remember the Chronique Scandaleuse as well as you, you old grumbler?"

"Would you like Laura Bell to know those fellows?" Warrington asked, his face turning rather red. "Would you let any woman you loved be contaminated by their company? I have no doubt that the poor Begum is ignorant of their histories. It seems to me she is ignorant of a great number of better things. It seems to me that your honest Begum is not a lady, Pen. It is not her fault, doubtless, that she has not had the education or learned the refinements of a lady."

"She is as moral as Lady Portsea, who has all the world at her balls, and as refined as Mrs. Bull, who breaks the King's English, and has half-a-dozen dukes at her table," Pen answered, rather sulkily. "Why should you and I be more squeamish than the rest of the world? Why are we to visit the sins of her fathers on this harmless kind creature? She never did anything but kindness to you or any mortal soul. As far as she knows, she does her best. She does not set up to be

more than she is. She gives you the best dinners she can buy, and the best company she can get. She pays the debts of that scamp of a husband of hers. She spoils her boy like the most virtuous mother in England. Her opinion about literary matters, to be sure, is not worth much; and I daresay she never read a line of Wordsworth, or heard of Tennyson in her life."

"No more has Mrs. Flanagan the laundress," growled out Pen's Mentor; "no more has Betty the housemaid; and I have no word of blame against them. But a high-souled man doesn't make friends of these. A gentleman doesn't choose these for his companions, or bitterly rues it afterwards if he do. Are you, who are setting up to be a man of the world and a philosopher, to tell me that the aim of life is to guttle three courses and dine off silver? Do you dare to own to yourself that your ambition in life is good claret, and that you'll dine with any, provided you get a stalled ox to feed on? You call me a Cynic—why, what a monstrous Cynicism it is, which you and the rest of you men of the world admit. I'd rather live upon raw turnips and sleep in a hollow tree, or turn backwoodsman or savage, than degrade myself to this civilisation, and own that a French cook was the thing in life best worth living for."

"Because you like a raw beef-steak and a pipe afterwards," broke out Pen, "you give yourself airs of superiority over people whose tastes are more dainty, and are not ashamed of the world they live in. Who goes about professing particular admiration, or esteem, or friendship, or gratitude even, for the people one meets every day? If A. asks me to his house, and gives me his best, I take his good things for what they are worth and no more. I do not profess to pay him back in friendship, but in the conventional money of society. When we part, we part without any grief. When we meet, we are tolerably glad to see one another. If I were only to live with my friends, your black muzzle, old George, is the only face I should see."

"You are your uncle's pupil," said Warrington, rather sadly; "and you speak like a worldling."

"And why not?" asked Pendennis; "why not acknowledge the world I stand upon, and submit to the conditions of the society which we live in and live by? I am older than you, George, in spite of your grizzled whiskers, and have seen much more of the world than you have in your garret here, shut up with your books and your reveries and your ideas of one-and-twenty. I say, I take the world as it is, and being of it, will not be ashamed of it. If the time is out of joint, have I any calling or strength to set it right?"

"Indeed, I don't think you have much of either," growled Pen's interlocutor.

"If I doubt whether I am better than my neighbour," Arthur continued,—"if I concede that I am no better, I also doubt whether he is better than I. I see men who begin with ideas of universal reform, and who, before their beards are grown, propound their loud plans for the regeneration of mankind, give up their schemes after a few years of bootless talking and vainglorious attempts to lead their fellows; and after they have found that men will no longer hear them, as indeed they never were in the least worthy to be heard, sink quietly into the rank and file,—acknowledging their aims impracticable, or thankful that they were never put into practice. The fiercest reformers grow calm, and are fain to put up with things as they are: the loudest Radical orators become dumb, quiescent placemen: the most fervent Liberals, when out of power, become humdrum Conservatives, or downright tyrants or despots in office. Look at Thiers, look at Guizot, in opposition and in place! Look at the Whigs appealing to the country, and the Whigs in power! Would you say that the conduct of these men is an act of treason, as the Radicals bawl,—who would give way in their turn, were their turn ever to come? No, only that they submit to circumstances which are stronger than they—march as the world marches towards reform, but at the world's pace (and the movements of the vast body of mankind must needs be slow)—forego this scheme as impracticable, on account of opposition—that as immature, be-

cause against the sense of the majority—are forced to calculate drawbacks and difficulties, as well as to think of reforms and advances—and compelled finally to submit, and to wait, and to compromise."

"The Right Honourable Arthur Pendennis could not speak better, or be more satisfied with himself, if he was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer," Warrington said.

"Self-satisfied? Why self-satisfied?" continued Pen. "It seems to me that my scepticism is more respectful and more modest than the revolutionary ardour of other folks. Many a patriot of eighteen, many a Spouting-Club orator, would turn the Bishops out of the House of Lords to-morrow, and throw the Lords out after the Bishops, and throw the Throne into the Thames after the Peers and the Bench. Is that man more modest than I, who take these institutions as I find them, and wait for time and truth to develop, or fortify, or (if you like) destroy them? A college tutor, or a nobleman's toady, who appears one fine day as my right reverend lord, in a silk apron and a shovel-hat, and assumes benedictory airs over me, is still the same man we remember at Oxbridge, when he was truckling to the tufts, and bullying the poor undergraduates in the lecture-room. An hereditary legislator, who passes his time with jockeys and black-legs and ballet-girls, and who is called to rule over me and his other betters because his grandfather made a lucky speculation in the funds, or found a coal or tin mine on his property, or because his stupid ancestor happened to be in command of ten thousand men as brave as himself, who overcame twelve thousand Frenchmen, or fifty thousand Indians—such a man, I say, inspires me with no more respect than the bitterest democrat can feel towards him. But, such as he is, he is a part of the old society to which we belong: and I submit to his lordship with acquiescence; and he takes his place above the best of us at all dinner parties, and there bides his time. I don't want to chop his head off with a guillotine, or to fling mud at him in the streets. When they call such a man a disgrace to his

order; and such another, who is good and gentle, refined and generous, who employs his great means in promoting every kindness and charity, and art and grace of life, in the kindest and most gracious manner, an ornament to his rank—the question as to the use and propriety of the order is not in the least affected one way or other. There it is, extant among us, a part of our habits, the creed of many of us, the growth of centuries, the symbol of a most complicated tradition—there stand my lord the bishop and my lord the hereditary legislator —what the French call *transactions* both of them—representing in their present shape mail-clad barons and double-sworded chiefs (from whom their lordships the hereditaries for the most part *don't* descend), and priests, professing to hold an absolute truth and a divinely inherited power, the which truth absolute our ancestors burned at the stake, and denied there; the which divine transmissible power still exists in print—to be believed, or not, pretty much at choice; and of these, I say, I acquiesce that they exist, and no more. If you say that these schemes, devised before printing was known, or steam was born; when thought was an infant, scared and whipped; and truth under its guardians was gagged, and swathed, and blindfolded, and not allowed to lift its voice, or to look out, or to walk under the sun; before men were permitted to meet, or to trade, or to speak with each other—if any one says (as some faithful souls do) that these schemes are for ever, and having been changed and modified constantly are to be subject to no farther development or decay, I laugh, and let the man speak. But I would have toleration for these, as I would ask it for my own opinions; and if they are to die, I would rather they had a decent and natural than an abrupt and violent death."

"You would have sacrificed to Jove," Warrington said, "had you lived in the time of the Christian persecutions."

"Perhaps I would," said Pen, with some sadness. "Perhaps I am a coward—perhaps my faith is unsteady; but this is my own reserve. What I argue

here is, that I will not persecute. Make a faith or a dogma absolute, and persecution becomes a logical consequence; and Dominic burns a Jew, or Calvin an Arian, or Nero a Christian, or Elizabeth or Mary a Papist or Protestant; or their father both or either, according to his humour; and acting without any pangs of remorse—but on the contrary, with strict notions of duty fulfilled. Make dogma absolute, and to inflict or to suffer death becomes easy and necessary; and Mahomet's soldiers shouting 'Paradise! Paradise!" and dying on the Christian spears, are not more or less praiseworthy than the same men slaughtering a townful of Jews, or cutting off the heads of all prisoners who would not acknowledge that there was but one Prophet of God."

"A little while since, young one," Warrington said, who had been listening to his friend's confessions neither without sympathy nor scorn, for his mood led him to indulge in both, "you asked me why I remained out of the strife of the world, and looked on at the great labour of my neighbour without taking any part in the struggle? Why, what a mere *dilettante* you own yourself to be, in this confession of general scepticism, and what a listless spectator yourself! You are six-and-twenty years old, and as *blasé* as a rake of sixty. You neither hope much, nor care much, nor believe much. You doubt about other men as much as about yourself. Were it made of such *pococuranti* as you, the world would be intolerable; and I had rather live in a wilderness of monkeys, and listen to their chatter, than in a company of men who denied everything."

"Were the world composed of Saint Bernards or Saint Dominics, it would be equally odious," said Pen, "and at the end of a few score years would cease to exist altogether. Would you have every man with his head shaved, and every woman in a cloister,—carrying out to the full the ascetic principle? Would you have conventicle hymns twanging from every lane in every city in the world? Would you have all the birds of the forest sing one note and fly with one feather? You call me a sceptic because I acknowledge what *is*; and in

acknowledging that, be it linnet or lark, or priest or parson; be it, I mean, any single one of the infinite varieties of the creatures of God (whose very name I would be understood to pronounce with reverence, and never to approach but with distant awe), I say that the study and acknowledgment of that variety amongst men especially increases our respect and wonder for the Creator, Commander, and Ordainer of all these minds, so different and yet so united,—meeting in a common adoration, and offering up, each according to his degree and means of approaching the Divine centre, his acknowledgment of praise and worship, each singing (to recur to the bird simile) his natural song."

"And so, Arthur, the hymn of a saint, or the ode of a poet, or the chant of a Newgate thief, are all pretty much the same in your philosophy," said George.

"Even that sneer could be answered were it to the point," Pendennis replied; "but it is not; and it could be replied to you, that even to the wretched outcry of the thief on the tree, the wisest and the best of all teachers we know of, the untiring Comforter and Consoler, promised a pitiful hearing and a certain hope. Hymns of saints! Odes of poets! who are we to measure the chances and opportunities, the means of doing, or even judging, right and wrong, awarded to men; and to establish the rule for meting out their punishments and rewards? We are as insolent and unthinking in judging of men's morals as of their intellects. We admire this man as being a great philosopher, and set down the other as a dullard, not knowing either, or the amount of truth in either, or being certain of the truth anywhere. We sing Te Deum for this hero who has won a battle, and De Profundis for that other one who has broken out of prison, and has been caught afterwards by the policeman. Our measure of rewards and punishments is most partial and incomplete, absurdly inadequate, utterly worldly, and we wish to continue it into the next world. Into that next and awful world we strive to pursue men, and send after them our impotent party verdicts of condemnation or acquittal. We set up

our paltry little rods to measure Heaven immeasurable, as if, in comparison to that, Newton's mind, or Pascal's or Shakespeare's, was any loftier than mine; as if the ray which travels from the sun would reach me sooner than the man who blacks my boots. Measured by that altitude, the tallest and the smallest among us are so alike diminutive and pitifully base, that I say we should take no count of the calculation, and it is a meanness to reckon the difference."

"Your figure fails there, Arthur," said the other, better pleased; "if even by common arithmetic we can multiply as we can reduce almost infinitely, the Great Reckoner must take count of all; and the small is not small, or the great great, to his infinity."

"I don't call those calculations in question," Arthur said; "I only say that yours are incomplete and premature; false in consequence, and, by every operation, multiplying into wider error. I do not condemn the men who killed Socrates and damned Galileo. I say that they damned Galileo and killed Socrates."

"And yet but a moment since you admitted the propriety of acquiescence in the present, and, I suppose, all other tyrannies?"

"No: but that if an opponent menaces me, of whom and without cost of blood and violence I can get rid, I would rather wait him out, and starve him out, than fight him out. Fabius fought Hannibal sceptically. Who was his Roman coadjutor, whom we read of in Plutarch when we were boys, who scoffed at the other's procrastination and doubted his courage, and engaged the enemy and was beaten for his pains?"

In these speculations and confessions of Arthur, the reader may perhaps see allusions to questions which, no doubt, have occupied and discomposed himself, and which he may have answered by very different solutions to those come to by our friend. We are not pledging ourselves for the correctness of his opinions, which readers will please to consider are delivered dramatically, the writer being no more answerable for them than for

the sentiments uttered by any other character of the story: our endeavour is merely to follow out, in its progress, the development of the mind of a worldly and selfish, but not ungenerous or unkind or truth-avoiding man. And it will be seen that the lamentable stage to which his logic at present has brought him, is one of general scepticism and sneering acquiescence in the world as it is: or if you like so to call it, a belief qualified with scorn in all things extant. The tastes and habits of such a man prevent him from being a boisterous demagogue, and his love of truth and dislike of cant keep him from advancing crude propositions, such as many loud reformers are constantly ready with; much more from uttering downright falsehoods in arguing questions or abusing opponents, which he would die or starve rather than use. It was not in our friend's nature to be able to utter certain lies; nor was he strong enough to protest against others, except with a polite sneer; his maxim being, that he owed obedience to all Acts of Parliament, as long as they were not repealed.

And to what does this easy and sceptical life lead a man? Friend Arthur was a Sadducee, and the Baptist might be in the Wilderness shouting to the poor, who were listening with all their might and faith to the preacher's awful accents and denunciations of wrath or woe or salvation; and our friend the Sadducee would turn his sleek mule with a shrug and a smile from the crowd, and go home to the shade of his terrace, and muse over preacher and audience, and turn to his roll of Plato, or his pleasant Greek song-book babbling of honey and Hybla, and nymphs and fountains and love. To what, we say, does this scepticism lead? It leads a man to a shameful loneliness and selfishness, so to speak —the more shameful, because it is so good-humoured and conscienceless and serene. Conscience! What is conscience? Why accept remorse? What is public or private faith? Mythuses alike enveloped in enormous tradition. If seeing and acknowledging the lies of the world, Arthur, as see them you can with only too fatal a clearness, you submit to them without any protest

farther than a laugh; if, plunged yourself in easy sensuality, you allow the whole wretched world to pass groaning by you unmoved: if the fight for the truth is taking place, and all men of honour are on the ground armed on the one side or the other, and you alone are to lie on your balcony and smoke your pipe out of the noise and the danger, you had better have died, or never have been at all, than such a sensual coward.

"The truth, friend!" Arthur said, imperturbably; "where is the truth? Show it me. That is the question between us. I see it on both sides. I see it on the Conservative side of the House, and amongst the Radicals, and even on the ministerial benches. I see it in this man who worships by Act of Parliament, and is rewarded with a silk apron and five thousand a year; in that man, who, driven fatally by the remorseless logic of his creed, gives up everything, friends, fame, dearest ties, closest vanities, the respect of an army of churchmen, the recognised position of a leader, and passes over, truth-impelled, to the enemy, in whose ranks he is ready to serve henceforth as a nameless private soldier:—I see the truth in that man, as I do in his brother, whose logic drives him to quite a different conclusion, and who, after having passed a life in vain endeavours to reconcile an irreconcilable book, flings it at last down in despair, and declares, with tearful eyes, and hands up to Heaven, his revolt and recantation. If the truth is with all these, why should I take side with any one of them? Some are called upon to preach: let them preach. Of these preachers there are somewhat too many, methinks, who fancy they have the gift. But we cannot all be parsons in church, that is clear. Some must sit silent and listen, or go to sleep mayhap. Have we not all our duties? The head charity-boy blows the bellows; the master canes the other boys in the organ-loft; the clerk sings out Amen from the desk; and the beadle with the staff opens the door for his Reverence, who rustles in silk up to the cushion. I won't cane the boys, nay, or say Amen always, or act as the church's champion or warrior, in the shape of the beadle with the staff; but I

will take off my hat in the place, and say my prayers there too, and shake hands with the clergyman as he steps on the grass outside. Don't I know that his being there is a compromise, and that he stands before me an Act of Parliament? That the church he occupies was built for other worship? That the Methodist chapel is next door; and that Bunyan the tinker is bawling out the tidings of damnation on the common hard by? Yes, I am a Sadducee; and I take things as I find them, and the world, and the Acts of Parliament of the world, as they are; and as I intend to take a wife, if I find one—not to be madly in love and prostrate at her feet like a fool—not to worship her as an angel, or to expect to find her as such—but to be good-natured to her, and courteous, expecting good-nature and pleasant society from her in turn. And so, George, if ever you hear of my marrying, depend on it, it won't be a romantic attachment on my side: and if you hear of any good place under Government, I have no particular scruples that I know of, which would prevent me from accepting your offer."

"O Pen, you scoundrel! I know what you mean," here Warrington broke out. "This is the meaning of your scepticism, of your quietism, of your atheism, my poor fellow. You're going to sell yourself, and Heaven help you! You are going to make a bargain which will degrade you and make you miserable for life, and there 's no use talking of it. If you are once bent on it, the devil won't prevent you."

"On the contrary, he 's on my side, isn't he, George?" said Pen with a laugh. "What good cigars these are! Come down and have a little dinner at the Club; the *chef's* in town, and he'll cook a good one for me. No, you won't? Don't be sulky, old boy, I'm going down to—to the country to-morrow."

THE BLACKMAILING OF MAJOR PENDENNIS

(Chaps. LXVII and LXVIII)

[Major Pendennis, in his diplomatic ingenuities on behalf of his nephew, has built up an elaborate engine for shooting his nephew into Parliament. The old intriguer is quaintly innocent of any consciousness that his plot practically amounts to blackmail. He has discovered that Lady Clavering, a rich woman married to an abject aristocrat, has a husband still living. With this threat of dispossession, he induces the wretched Sir Francis Clavering to give up his seat in Parliament to Arthur. Just as the Major is blandly blackmailing Clavering he finds himself suddenly blackmailed by his own servant, Morgan.]

Whilst the Major was absent from his lodgings, Morgan had been seated in the landlady's parlour, drinking freely of hot brandy-and-water, and pouring out on Mrs. Brixham some of the abuse which he had received from his master upstairs. Mrs. Brixham was Morgan's slave. He was his landlady's landlord. He had bought the lease of the house which she rented; he had got her name and her son's to acceptances, and a bill of sale which made him master of the luckless widow's furniture. The young Brixham was a clerk in an insurance-office, and Morgan could put him into what he called quod any day. Mrs. Brixham was a clergyman's widow, and Mr. Morgan, after performing his duties on the first floor, had a pleasure in making the old lady fetch him his boot-jack and his slippers. She was his slave. The little black profiles of her son and daughter; the very picture of Tiddlecot Church, where she was married, and her poor dear Brixham lived and died, was now Morgan's property, as it hung there over the mantel-piece of his back-parlour. Morgan sat in the widow's back-room, in the ex-curate's old horsehair study-chair, making Mrs. Brixham bring supper for him, and fill his glass again and again.

The liquor was bought with the poor woman's own coin, and hence Morgan indulged in it only the more

freely; and he had eaten his supper and was drinking a third tumbler when old Pendennis returned from the Club, and went upstairs to his rooms. Mr. Morgan swore very savagely at him and his bell, when he heard the latter, and finished his tumbler of brandy before he went up to answer the summons.

He received the abuse consequent on this delay in silence, nor did the Major condescend to read in the flushed face and glaring eyes of the man, the anger under which he was labouring. The old gentleman's foot-bath was at the fire; his gown and slippers awaiting him there. Morgan knelt down to take his boots off with due subordination: and as the Major abused him from above, kept up a growl of maledictions below at his feet. Thus, when Pendennis was crying, "Confound you, sir, mind that strap—curse you, don't wrench my foot off," Morgan *sotto voce* below was expressing a wish to strangle him, drown him, and punch his head off.

The boots removed, it became necessary to divest Mr. Pendennis of his coat; and for this purpose the valet had necessarily to approach very near to his employer; so near that Pendennis could not but perceive what Mr. Morgan's late occupation had been; to which he adverted in that simple and forcible phraseology which men are sometimes in the habit of using to their domestics: informing Morgan that he was a drunken beast, and that he smelt of brandy.

At this the man broke out, losing patience, and flinging up all subordination, "I'm drunk, am I? I'm a beast, am I? I'm d——d, am I? you infernal old miscreant. Shall I wring your old head off, and drownd yer in that pail of water? Do you think I'm a-goin' to bear your confounded old harrogance, you old Wigsby! Chatter your old hivories at me, do you, you grinning old baboon! Come on, if you are a man, and can stand to a man. Ha! you coward, knives, knives!"

"If you advance a step I'll send it into you," said the Major, seizing up a knife that was on the table near him. "Go downstairs, you drunken brute, and leave

the house; send for your book and your wages in the morning, and never let me see your insolent face again. This d——d impertinence of yours has been growing for some months past. You have been growing too rich. You are not fit for service. Get out of it, and out of the house."

"Where would you wish me to go, pray, out of the 'ouse?" asked the man, "and won't it be equal convenient to-morrow mornin'?—*tootyfay mame shose, sivva-play munseer?*"

"Silence, you beast, and go!" cried out the Major.

Morgan began to laugh, with rather a sinister laugh. "Look yere, Pendennis," he said, seating himself; "since I've been in this room you've called me beast, brute, dog: and d——d me, haven't you? How do you suppose one man likes that sort of talk from another? How many years have I waited on you, and how many damns and cusses have you given me, along with my wages? Do you think a man 's a dog, that you can talk to him in this way? If I choose to drink a little, why shouldn't I? I've seen many a gentleman drunk form'ly, and per'aps have the 'abit from them. I ain't a-goin' to leave this house, old feller, and shall I tell you why? The house is my house, every stick of furnitur' in it is mine, excep' *your* old traps, and your shower-bath, and your wig-box. I've bought the place, I tell you, with my own industry and perseverance. I can show a hundred pound, where you can show fifty, or your damned supersellious nephew either. I've served you honourable, done everythink for you these dozen years, and I'm a dog, am I? I'm a beast, am I? That 's the language for gentlemen, not for our rank. But I'll bear it no more. I throw up your service; I'm tired on it; I've combed your old wig and buckled your old girths and waistbands long enough, I tell you. Don't look savage at me, I'm sitting in my own chair, in my own room, a-telling the truth to you. I'll be your beast, and your brute, and your dog no more, Major Pendennis 'Alf Pay."

The fury of the old gentleman, met by the servant's

abrupt revolt, had been shocked and cooled by the concussion, as much as if a sudden shower-bath or a pail of cold water had been flung upon him. That effect produced, and his anger calmed, Morgan's speech had interested him, and he rather respected his adversary, and his courage in facing him, as of old days, in the fencing-room, he would have admired the opponent who hit him.

"You are no longer my servant," the Major said: "and the house may be yours; but the lodgings are mine, and you will have the goodness to leave them. To-morrow morning, when we have settled our accounts, I shall remove into other quarters. In the meantime, I desire to go to bed, and have not the slightest wish for your farther company."

"*We'll* have a settlement, don't you be afraid," Morgan said, getting up from his chair. "I ain't done with you yet; nor with your family, nor with the Clavering family, Major Pendennis; and that you shall know."

"Have the goodness to leave the room, sir;—I'm tired," said the major.

"Hah! you'll be more tired of me afore you've done," answered the man, with a sneer, and walked out of the room; leaving the Major to compose himself, as best he might, after the agitation of this extraordinary scene.

He sat and mused by his fire-side over the past events, and the confounded impudence and ingratitude of servants; and thought how he should get a new man; how devilish unpleasant it was for a man of his age, and with his habits, to part with a fellow to whom he had been accustomed: how Morgan had a receipt for boot-varnish, which was incomparably better and more comfortable to the feet than any he had ever tried: how very well he made mutton-broth, and tended him when he was unwell. "Gad, it's a hard thing to lose a fellow of that sort: but he must go," thought the Major. "He has grown rich, and impudent since he has grown rich. He was horribly tipsy and abusive to-night. We must part, and I must go out of the lodgings. Dammy, I like the lodgings; I'm used to 'em. It's very un-

pleasant, at my time of life, to change my quarters." And so on mused the old gentleman. The shower-bath had done him good: the testiness was gone: the loss of the umbrella, the smell of paint at the Club, were forgotten under the superior excitement. "Confound the insolent villain!" thought the old gentleman. "He understood my wants to a nicety; he was the best servant in England." He thought about his servant as a man thinks of a horse that has carried him long and well, and that has come down with him, and is safe no longer. How the deuce to replace him? Where can he get such another animal!

In these melancholy cogitations the Major who had donned his own dressing-gown and replaced his head of hair (a little grey had been introduced into the *coiffure* of late by Mr. Truefitt, which had given the Major's head the most artless and respectable appearance); in these cogitations, we say, the Major, who had taken off his wig and put on his night-handkerchief, sate absorbed by the fire-side, when a feeble knock came at his door, which was presently opened by the landlady of the lodgings.

"God bless my soul, Mrs. Brixham!" cried out the Major, startled that a lady should behold him in the *simple appareil* of his night-toilette. "It—it 's very late, Mrs. Brixham."

"I wish I might speak to you, sir," said the landlady, very piteously.

"About Morgan, I suppose? He has cooled himself at the pump. Can't take him back, Mrs. Brixham. Impossible. I'd determined to part with him before, when I heard of his dealings in the discount business—I suppose you've heard of them, Mrs. Brixham? My servant's a capitalist, begad."

"Oh, sir," said Mrs. Brixham, "I know it to my cost. I borrowed from him a little money five years ago; and though I have paid him many times over, I am entirely in his power. I am ruined by him, sir. Everything I had is his. He 's a dreadful man."

"Eh, Mrs. Brixham? *tant pis*—dev'lish sorry for you,

and that I must quit your house after lodging here so long: there 's no help for it. I must go."

"He says we must all go, sir," sobbed out the luckless widow. "He came downstairs from you just now—he had been drinking, and it always makes him very wicked—and he said that you had insulted him, sir, and treated him like a dog, and spoken to him unkindly; and he swore he would be revenged, and—and I owe him a hundred and twenty pounds, sir,—and he has a bill of sale of all my furniture—and says he will turn me out of my house, and send my poor George to prison. He has been the ruin of my family, that man."

"Dev'lish sorry, Mrs. Brixham; pray take a chair. What can I do?"

"Could you not intercede with him for us? George will give half his allowance: my daughter can send something. If you will but stay on, sir, and pay a quarter's rent in advance——"

"My good madam, I would as soon give a quarter in advance as not, if I were going to stay in the lodgings. But I can't; and I can't afford to fling away twenty pounds, my good madam. I'm a poor half-pay officer, and want every shilling I have, begad. As far as a few pounds goes—say five pounds—I don't say—and shall be most happy, and that sort of thing: and I'll give it to you in the morning with pleasure: but—but it 's getting late, and I have made a railroad journey."

"God's will be done, sir," said the poor woman, drying her tears. "I must bear my fate."

"And a dev'lish hard one it is, and most sincerely I pity you, Mrs. Brixham. I—I'll say ten pounds, if you will permit me. Good-night."

"Mr. Morgan, sir, when he came downstairs, and when—when I besought him to have pity on me, and told him he had been the ruin of my family, said something which I did not well understand—that he would ruin every family in the house—that he knew something would bring you down too—and that you should pay him for your—your insolence to him. I—I must own to you, that I went down on my knees to him, sir; and he

said, with a dreadful oath against you, that he would have you on your knees."

"Me?—by Gad, that is too pleasant! Where is the confounded fellow?"

"He went away, sir. He said he should see you in the morning. Oh, pray try and pacify him, and save me and my poor boy." And the widow went away with this prayer, to pass her night as she might, and look for the dreadful morrow.

The last words about himself excited Major Pendennis so much, that his compassion for Mrs. Brixham's misfortunes was quite forgotten in the consideration of his own case.

"Me on my knees?" thought he, as he got into bed: "confound his impudence. Who ever saw me on my knees? What the devil does the fellow know? Gad, I've not had an affair these twenty years. I defy him." And the old campaigner turned round and slept pretty sound, being rather excited and amused by the events of the day—the last day in Bury Street, he was determined it should be. "For it 's impossible to stay on with a valet over me and a bankrupt landlady. What good can I do this poor devil of a woman? I'll give her twenty pound—there 's Warrington's twenty pound, which he has just paid—but what 's the use? She'll want more, and more, and more, and that cormorant Morgan will swallow all. No, dammy, I can't afford to know poor people; and to-morrow I'll say good-bye—to Mrs. Brixham and Mr. Morgan."

Early next morning Pendennis's shutters were opened by Morgan, who appeared as usual, with a face perfectly grave and respectful, bearing with him the old gentleman's clothes, cans of waters, and elaborate toilette requisites.

"It 's you, is it?" said the old fellow from his bed. "I shan't take you back again, you understand."

"I 'ave not the least wish to be took back agin, Major Pendennis," Mr. Morgan said, with grave dignity, "nor

to serve you nor hany man. But as I wish you to be comf'table as long as you stay in my house, I came up to do what 's ne'ssary." And once more, and for the last time, Mr. James Morgan laid out the silver dressing-case, and strapped the shining razor.

These offices concluded, he addressed himself to the Major with an indescribable solemnity, and said: "Thinkin' that you would most likely be in want of a respectable pusson, until you suited yourself, I spoke to a young man last night, who is 'ere."

"Indeed," said the warrior in the tent-bed.

"He 'ave lived in the fust fam'lies, and I can wouch for his respectability."

"You are monstrous polite," grinned the old Major. And the truth is, that after the occurrences of the previous evening, Morgan had gone out to his own Club at the "Wheel of Fortune," and there finding Frosch, a courier and valet just returned from a foreign tour with young Lord Cubley, and for the present disposable, had represented to Mr. Frosch, that he, Morgan, had had "a devil of a blow-hup with his own Gov'nor, and was goin' to retire from the business haltogether, and that if Frosch wanted a tempo'ry job, he might prob'bly have it by applying in Bury Street."

"You are very polite," said the Major, "and your recommendation, I am sure, will have every weight."

Morgan blushed; he felt his master was "a-chaffin' of him." "The man have awaited on you before, sir," he said with great dignity. "Lord De la Pole, sir, gave him to his nephew young Lord Cubley, and he have been with him on his foring tour, and not wishing to go to Fitzurse Castle, which Frosch's chest is delicate, and he cannot bear the cold in Scotland, he is free to serve you or not, as you choose."

"I repeat, sir, that you are exceedingly polite," said the Major. "Come in, Frosch—you will do very well—Mr. Morgan, will you have the great kindness to——"

"I shall show him what is ne'ssary, sir, and what is custom'ry for you to wish to 'ave done. Will you please to take breakfast 'ere or at the Club, Major Pendennis?"

"With your kind permission, I will breakfast here, and afterwards we will make our little arrangements."

"If you please, sir."

"Will you now oblige me by leaving the room?"

Morgan withdrew; the excessive politeness of his ex-employer made him almost as angry as the Major's bitterest words. And whilst the old gentleman is making his mysterious toilet, we will also modestly retire.

After breakfast, Major Pendennis and his new aide-de-camp occupied themselves in preparing for their departure. The establishment of the old bachelor was not very complicated. He encumbered himself with no useless wardrobe. A bible (his mother's), a road-book, Pen's novel (calf elegant), and the Duke of Wellington's Despatches, with a few prints, maps, and portraits of that illustrious general, and of various sovereigns and consorts of this country, and of the General under whom Major Pendennis had served in India, formed his literary and artistical collection: he was always ready to march at a few hours' notice, and the cases in which he had brought his property into his lodgings some fifteen years before, were still in the lofts amply sufficient to receive all his goods. These, the young woman who did the work of the house, and who was known by the name of Betty to her mistress, and of Slavey to Mr. Morgan, brought down from their resting-place, and obediently dusted and cleaned under the eyes of the terrible Morgan. His demeanour was guarded and solemn; he had spoken no word as yet to Mrs. Brixham respecting his threats of the past night, but he looked as if he would execute them, and the poor widow tremblingly awaited her fate.

Old Pendennis, armed with his cane, superintended the package of his goods and chattels, under the hands of Mr. Frosch, and the Slavey burned such of his papers as he did not care to keep: flung open doors and closets until they were all empty; and now all boxes and chests were closed, except his desk, which was ready to receive the final accounts of Mr. Morgan.

That individual now made his appearance, and brought

his books. "As I wish to speak to you in privick, per'aps you will 'ave the kindness to request Frosch to step downstairs," he said, on entering.

"Bring a couple of cabs, Frosch, if you please—and wait downstairs until I ring for you," said the Major. Morgan saw Frosch downstairs, watched him go along the street upon his errand, and produced his books and accounts, which were simple and very easily settled.

"And now, sir," said he, having pocketed the cheque which his ex-employer gave him, and signed his name to his book with a flourish, "and now that accounts is closed between us, sir," he said, "I propose to speak to you as one man to another" (Morgan liked the sound of his own voice: and, as an individual, indulged in public speaking whenever he could get an opportunity, at the Club, or the housekeeper's room), "and I must tell you, that I'm in *possussion of certing infamation.*"

"And may I inquire of what nature, pray?" asked the Major.

"It 's valuble information, Major Pendennis, as you know very well. I know of a marriage as is no marriage —of a honourable Baronet as is no more married than I am; and which his wife is married to somebody else, as you know, too, sir."

Pendennis at once understood all. "Ha! this accounts for your behaviour. You have been listening at the door, sir, I suppose," said the Major, looking very haughty; "I forgot to look at the keyhole when I went to that public-house, or I might have suspected what sort of a person was behind it."

"I may have my schemes as you may have yours, I suppose," answered Morgan. "I may get my information, and I may act on that information, and I may find that information valuble as anybody else may. A poor servant may have a bit of luck as well as a gentleman, mayn't he? Don't you be putting on your 'aughty looks, sir, and comin' the aristocrat over me. That 's all gammon with me. I'm an Englishman, I am, and as good as you."

"To what the devil does this tend, sir? and how does

the secret which you have surprised concern me, I should like to know?" asked Major Pendennis, with great majesty.

"How does it concern me, indeed? how grand we are! How does it concern my nephew, I wonder? How does it concern my nephew's seat in Parlyment: and to subornation of bigamy? How does it concern that? What, are you to be the only man to have a secret, and to trade on it? Why shouldn't I go halves, Major Pendennis? I've found it out too. Look here! I ain't goin' to be unreasonable with you. Make it worth my while, and I'll keep the thing close. Let Mr. Arthur take his seat, and his rich wife, if you like; I don't want to marry her. But I will have my share, as sure as my name's James Morgan. And if I don't——"

"And if you don't, sir—what?" Pendennis asked.

"If I don't, I split, and tell all. I smash Clavering, and have him and his wife up for bigamy—so help me, I will! I smash young Hopeful's marriage, and I show up you and him as makin' use of this secret, in order to squeeze a seat in Parlyment out of Sir Francis, and a fortune out of his wife."

"Mr. Pendennis knows no more of this business than the babe unborn, sir," cried the Major aghast. "No more than Lady Clavering, than Miss Amory does."

"Tell that to the marines, Major," replied the valet; "that cock won't fight with me."

"Do you doubt my word, you villain?"

"No bad language. I don't care one twopence'a'p'ny whether your word's true or not. I tell you, I intend this to be a nice little annuity to me, Major: for I have every one of you; and I ain't such a fool as to let you go. I should say that you might make it five hundred a year to me among you, easy. Pay me down the first quarter now, and I'm as mum as a mouse. Just give me a note for one twenty-five. There's your cheque-book on your desk."

"And there's this too, you villain," cried the old gentleman. In the desk to which the valet pointed was a little double-barrelled pistol, which had belonged to

Pendennis's old patron, the Indian commander-in-chief, and which had accompanied him in many a campaign. "One more word, you scoundrel, and I'll shoot you, like a mad dog. Stop—by Jove, I'll do it now. You'll assault me, will you? You'll strike at an old man, will you, you lying coward? Kneel down and say your prayers, sir, for by the Lord you shall die."

The Major's face glared with rage at his adversary, who looked terrified before him for a moment, and at the next, with a shriek of "Murder!" sprang towards the open window, under which a policeman happened to be on his beat. "Murder! Police!" bellowed Mr. Morgan.

To his surprise, Major Pendennis wheeled away the table and walked to the other window, which was also open. He beckoned the policeman. "Come up here, policeman," he said, and then went and placed himself against the door.

"You miserable sneak," he said to Morgan; "the pistol hasn't been loaded these fifteen years, as you would have known very well, if you had not been such a coward. That policeman is coming, and I will have him up, and have your trunks searched; I have reason to believe that you are a thief, sir. I know you are. I'll swear to the things."

"You gave 'em to me—you gave 'em to me!" cried Morgan.

The Major laughed. "We'll see," he said; and the guilty valet remembered some fine lawn-fronted shirts—a certain gold-headed cane—an opera-glass, which he had forgotten to bring down, and of which he had assumed the use along with certain articles of his master's clothes, which the old dandy neither wore nor asked for.

Policeman X entered; followed by the scared Mrs. Brixham and her maid-of-all-work, who had been at the door and found some difficulty in closing it against the street amateurs, who wished to see the row. The Major began instantly to speak.

"I have had occasion to discharge this drunken scoundrel," he said. "Both last night and this morning

he insulted and assaulted me. I am an old man and took up a pistol. You see it is not loaded, and this coward cried out before he was hurt. I am glad you are come. I was charging him with taking my property, and desired to examine his trunks and his room."

"The velvet coat you ain't worn these three years, nor the weskits, and I thought I might take the shirts, and I—I take my hoath I intended to put back the hopera-glass," roared Morgan, writhing with rage and terror.

"The man acknowledges that he is a thief," the Major said, calmly. "He has been in my service for years, and I have treated him with every kindness and confidence. We will go upstairs and examine his trunks."

In those trunks Mr. Morgan had things which he would fain keep from public eyes. Mr. Morgan, the bill-discounter, gave goods as well as money to his customers. He provided young spendthrifts with snuff-boxes and pins and jewels and pictures and cigars, and of a very doubtful quality those cigars and jewels and pictures were. Their display at a police-office, the discovery of his occult profession, and the exposure of the Major's property, which he had appropriated, indeed, rather than stolen—would not have added to the reputation of Mr. Morgan. He looked a piteous image of terror and discomfiture.

"He'll smash me, will he?" thought the Major. "I'll crush him now, and finish with him."

But he paused. He looked at poor Mrs. Brixham's scared face; and he thought for a moment to himself that the man brought to bay and in prison might make disclosures which had best be kept secret, and that it was best not to deal too fiercely with a desperate man.

"Stop," he said, "policeman. I'll speak with this man by himself."

"Do you give Mr. Morgan in charge?" said the policeman.

"I have brought no charge as yet," the Major said, with a significant look at his man.

"Thank you, sir," whispered Morgan, very low.

"Go outside the door, and wait there, policeman, if you please.—Now, Morgan, you have played one game with me, and you have not had the best of it, my good man. No, begad, you've not had the best of it, though you had the best hand; and you've got to pay, too, now, you scoundrel."

"Yes, sir," said the man.

"I've only found out, within the last week, the game which you have been driving, you villain. Young De Boots, of the Blues, recognized you as the man who came to barracks, and did business one-third in money, one-third in eau-de-Cologne, and one-third in French prints, you confounded demure old sinner! I didn't miss anything, or care a straw what you'd taken, you booby; but I took the shot, and it hit—hit the bull's-eye, begad. Dammy, sir, I'm an old campaigner."

"What do you want with me, sir?"

"I'll tell you. Your bills, I suppose, you keep about you in that dem'd great leather pocket-book, don't you? You'll burn Mrs. Brixham's bill?"

"Sir, I ain't a-goin' to part with my property," growled the man.

"You lent her sixty pounds five years ago. She and that poor devil of an insurance clerk, her son, have paid you fifty pounds a year ever since; and you have got a bill of sale of her furniture, and her note of hand for a hundred and fifty pounds. She told me so last night. By Jove, sir, you've bled that poor woman enough."

"I won't give it up," said Morgan. "If I do I'm——"

"Policeman!" cried the Major.

"You shall have the bill," said Morgan. "You're not going to take money of me, and you a gentleman?"

"I shall want you directly," said the Major to X, who here entered, and who again withdrew.

"No, my good sir," the old gentleman continued; "I have not any desire to have farther pecuniary transactions with you; but we will draw out a little paper, which you will have the kindness to sign. No, stop!—you shall write it: you have improved immensely in

writing of late, and have now a very good hand. You shall sit down and write, if you please—there, at that table—so—let me see—we may as well have the date. Write 'Bury Street, St. James's, October 21, 18—.'"

And Morgan wrote as he was instructed, and as the pitiless old Major continued:

"'I, James Morgan, having come in extreme poverty into the service of Arthur Pendennis, Esquire, of Bury Street, St. James's, a Major in his Majesty's service, acknowledge that I received liberal wages and board wages from my employer, during fifteen years.'—You can't object to that, I am sure," said the Major.

"During fifteen years," wrote Morgan.

"'In which time, by my own care and prudence,'" the dictator resumed, "'I have managed to amass sufficient money to purchase the house in which my master resides, and besides to effect other savings. Amongst other persons from whom I have had money, I may mention my present tenant, Mrs. Brixham, who, in consideration of sixty pounds advanced by me five years since, has paid back to me the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds sterling, besides giving me a note of hand for one hundred and twenty pounds, which I restore to her at the desire of my late master, Major Arthur Pendennis, and therewith free her furniture, of which I had a bill of sale.'—Have you written?"

"I think if this pistol was loaded, I'd blow your brains out," said Morgan.

"No, you wouldn't. You have too great a respect for your valuable life, my good man," the Major answered. "Let us go on and begin a new sentence."

"'And having, in return for my master's kindness, stolen his property from him, which I acknowledge to be now upstairs in my trunks: and having uttered falsehoods regarding his and other honourable families, I do hereby, in consideration of his clemency to me, express my regret for uttering these falsehoods, and for stealing his property; and declare that I am not worthy of belief, and that I hope'—yes, begad, that I hope—'to amend for the future. Signed, James Morgan.'"

"I'm d——d if I sign it," said Morgan.

"My good man, it will happen to you, whether you sign or no, begad," said the old fellow, chuckling at his own wit. "There, I shall not use this, you understand, unless—unless I am compelled to do so. Mrs. Brixham, and our friend the policeman, will witness it, I dare say, without reading it: and I will give the old lady back her note of hand, and say, which you will confirm, that she and you are quits. I see there is Frosch come back with the cab for my trunks; I shall go to an hotel.—You may come in now, policeman; Mr. Morgan and I have arranged our little dispute. If Mrs. Brixham will sign this paper, and you, policeman, will do so, I shall be very much obliged to you both. Mrs. Brixham, you and your worthy landlord, Mr. Morgan, are quits. I wish you joy of him. Let Frosch come and pack the rest of the things."

Frosch, aided by the Slavey, under the calm superintendence of Mr. Morgan, carried Major Pendennis's boxes to the cab in waiting; and Mrs. Brixham, when her persecutor was not by, came and asked a Heaven's blessing upon the Major, her preserver, and the best and quietest and kindest of lodgers. And having given her a finger to shake, which the humble lady received with a curtsey, and over which she was ready to make a speech full of tears, the Major cut short that valedictory oration, and walked out of the house to the hotel in Jermyn Street, which was not many steps from Morgan's door.

That individual, looking forth from the parlour window, discharged anything but blessings at his parting guest; but the stout old boy could afford not to be frightened at Mr. Morgan, and flung him a look of great contempt and humour as he strutted away with his cane.

THE NEWCOMES

[The scene of Colonel Newcome in the Cave of Harmony requires no introduction, because it is itself the introduction to the whole book, and a very complete and effective introduction at that. The general theme of the book is the general theme of Thackeray: that knaves and fools alike fail, but that there is something dignified and genial about the failure of the fools. It may be doubted whether such an idea was ever so exactly expressed as it is in this great scene, where the simpleton is the first to enjoy what is good and the first to repudiate what is evil.]

COLONEL NEWCOME IN THE CAVE OF HARMONY

(From Chapter I)

There was once a time when the sun used to shine brighter than it appears to do in this latter half of the nineteenth century; when the zest of life was certainly keener; when tavern wines seemed to be delicious, and tavern dinners the perfection of cookery; when the perusal of novels was productive of immense delight, and the monthly advent of magazine-day was hailed as an exciting holiday; when to know Thompson, who had written a magazine-article, was an honour and a privilege; and to see Brown, the author of the last romance, in the flesh, and actually walking in the Park with his umbrella and Mrs. Brown, was an event remarkable, and to the end of life to be perfectly well remembered; when the women of this world were a thousand times more beautiful than those of the present time; and the houris of the theatres especially so ravishing and angelic, that to see them was to set the heart in motion, and to see them again was to struggle for half an hour pre-

viously at the door of the pit; when tailors called at a man's lodgings to dazzle him with cards of fancy-waistcoats; when it seemed necessary to purchase a grand silver dressing-case, so as to be ready for the beard which was not yet born (as yearling brides provide lace caps, and work rich clothes for the expected darling); when to ride in the Park on a ten-shilling hack seemed to be the height of fashionable enjoyment, and to splash your college tutor as you were driving down Regent Street in a hired cab the triumph of satire; when the acme of pleasure seemed to be to meet Jones of Trinity at the Bedford, and to make an arrangement with him, and with King of Corpus (who was staying at the Colonnade), and Martin of Trinity Hall (who was with his family in Bloomsbury Square), to dine at the Piazza, go to the play and see Braham in "Fra Diavolo," and end the frolic evening by partaking of supper and a song at the "Cave of Harmony."—It was in the days of my own youth, then, that I met one or two of the characters who are to figure in this history, and whom I must ask leave to accompany for a short while, and until, familiarized with the public, they can make their own way. As I recall them the roses bloom again, and the nightingales sing by the calm Bendemeer.

Going to the play then, and to the pit, as was the fashion in those merry days, with some young fellows of my own age, having listened delighted to the most cheerful and brilliant of operas, and laughed enthusiastically at the farce, we became naturally hungry at twelve o'clock at night, and a desire for welsh-rabbits and good old glee-singing led us to the "Cave of Harmony," then kept by the celebrated Hoskins, among whose friends we were proud to count.

We enjoyed such intimacy with Mr. Hoskins that he never failed to greet us with a kind nod; and John the waiter made room for us near the President of the convivial meeting. We knew the three admirable glee-singers, and many a time they partook of brandy-and-water at our expense. One of us gave his call dinner at Hoskins's, and a merry time we had of it. Where are

you, O Hoskins, bird of the night? Do you warble your songs by Acheron, or troll your choruses by the banks of black Avernus?

The goes of stout, "The Chough and Crow," the welsh-rabbit, "The Red-Cross Knight," the hot brandy-and-water (the brown, the strong!) "The Bloom is on the Rye" (the bloom isn't on the rye any more!)—the song and the cup, in a word, passed round merrily; and, I daresay, the songs and bumpers were encored. It happened that there was a very small attendance at the "Cave" that night, and we were all more sociable and friendly because the company was select. The songs were chiefly of the sentimental class; such ditties were much in vogue at the time of which I speak.

There came into the "Cave" a gentleman with a lean brown face and long black mustachios, dressed in very loose clothes, and evidently a stranger to the place. At least he had not visited it for a long time. He was pointing out changes to a lad who was in his company; and, calling for sherry-and-water, he listened to the music, and twirled his mustachios with great enthusiasm.

At the very first glimpse of me the boy jumped up from the table, bounded across the room, ran to me with his hands out, and, blushing, said, "Don't you know me?"

It was little Newcome, my school-fellow, whom I had not seen for six years, grown a fine tall young stripling now, with the same bright blue eyes which I remembered when he was quite a little boy.

"What the deuce brings you here?" said I.

He laughed and looked roguish. "My father—that's my father—would come. He's just come back from India. He says all the wits used to come here,—Mr. Sheridan, Captain Morris, Colonel Hanger, Professor Porson. I told him your name, and that you used to be very kind to me when I first went to Smithfield. I've left now: I'm to have a private tutor. I say, I've got such a jolly pony. It's better fun than old Smiffle."

Here the whiskered gentleman, Newcome's father, pointing to a waiter to follow him with his glass of

sherry-and-water, strode across the room twirling his mustachios, and came up to the table where we sate, making a salutation with his hat in a very stately and polite manner, so that Hoskins himself was, as it were, obliged to bow; the glee-singers murmured among themselves (their eyes rolling over their glasses towards one another as they sucked brandy-and-water), and that mischievous little wag, little Nadab the Improvisatore (who had just come in), began to mimic him, feeling his imaginary whiskers, after the manner of the stranger, and flapping about his pocket-handkerchief in the most ludicrous manner. Hoskins checked this ribaldry by sternly looking towards Nadab, and at the same time calling upon the gents to give their orders, the waiter being in the room, and Mr. Bellew about to sing a song.

Newcome's father came up and held out his hand to me. I daresay I blushed, for I had been comparing him to the admirable Harley in the *Critic*, and had christened him Don Ferolo Whiskerandos.

He spoke in a voice exceedingly soft and pleasant, and with a cordiality so simple and sincere, that my laughter shrank away ashamed; and gave place to a feeling much more respectful and friendly. In youth, you see, one is touched by kindness. A man of the world may, of course, be grateful or not as he chooses.

"I have heard of your kindness, sir," says he, "to my boy. And whoever is kind to him is kind to me. Will you allow me to sit down by you? and may I beg you to try my cheroots?" We were friends in a minute —young Newcome snuggling by my side, his father opposite, to whom, after a minute or two of conversation, I presented my three college friends.

"You have come here, gentlemen, to see the wits," says the Colonel. "Are there any celebrated persons in the room? I have been five-and-thirty years from home, and want to see all that is to be seen."

King of Corpus (who was an incorrigible wag) was on the point of pulling some dreadful long bow, and pointing out a half-dozen of people in the room, as Rogers, and Hook, and Luttrel, etc., the most cele-

brated wits of that day; but I cut King's shins under the table, and got the fellow to hold his tongue.

"*Maxima debetur pueris*," says Jones (a fellow of very kind feeling, who has gone into the Church since), and, writing on his card to Hoskins, hinted to him that a boy was in the room, and a gentleman who was quite a greenhorn: hence that the songs had better be carefully selected.

And so they were. A ladies' school might have come in, and, but for the smell of the cigars and brandy-and-water, have taken no harm by what happened. Why should it not always be so? If there are any "Caves of Harmony" now, I warrant Messieurs the landlords, their interests would be better consulted by keeping their singers within bounds. The very greatest scamps like pretty songs, and are melted by them; so are honest people. It was worth a guinea to see the simple Colonel, and his delight at the music. He forgot all about the distinguished wits whom he had expected to see in his ravishment over the glees.

"I say, Clive, this is delightful. This is better than your aunt's concert with all the Squallinis, hey? I shall come here often. Landlord, may I venture to ask those gentlemen if they will take any refreshment? What are their names?" (to one of his neighbours). "I was scarcely allowed to hear any singing before I went out, except an oratorio, where I fell asleep; but this, by George, is as fine as Incledon!" He became quite excited over his sherry-and-water—("I'm sorry to see you, gentlemen, drinking brandy-pawnee," says he; "it plays the deuce with our young men in India.") He joined in all the choruses with an exceedingly sweet voice. He laughed at "The Derby Ram" so that it did you good to hear him; and when Hoskins sang (as he did admirably) "The Old English Gentleman," and described, in measured cadence, the death of that venerable aristocrat, tears trickled down the honest warrior's cheek, while he held out his hand to Hoskins and said, "Thank you, sir, for that song; it is an honour to human nature." On which Hoskins began to cry too.

And now young Nadab, having been cautioned, commenced one of those surprising feats of improvisation with which he used to charm audiences. He took us all off, and had rhymes pat about all the principal persons in the room: King's pins (which he wore very splendid), Martin's red waistcoat, etc. The Colonel was charmed with each feat, and joined delighted with the chorus—"Ritolderol-ritolderol-ritolderolderay" (*bis*). And, when coming to the Colonel himself, he burst out—

A military gent I see—and while his face I scan,
I think you'll all agree with me—He came from Hindostan.
And by his side sits laughing free—A youth with curly head,
I think you'll all agree with me—that he was best in bed. Ritolderol, etc.

The Colonel laughed immensely at this sally, and clapped his son, young Clive, on the shoulder, "Hear what he says of you, sir? Clive, best be off to bed, my boy—ho, ho! No, no. We know a trick worth two of that. 'We won't go home till morning, till daylight does appear.' Why should we? Why shouldn't my boy have innocent pleasure? I was allowed none when I was a young chap, and the severity was nearly the ruin of me. I must go and speak with that young man—the most astonishing thing I ever heard in my life. What's his name? Mr. Nadab? Mr. Nadab, sir, you have delighted me. May I make so free as to ask you to come and dine with me to-morrow at six. Colonel Newcome, if you please, Nerot's Hotel, Clifford Street. I am always proud to make the acquaintance of men of genius, and you are one, or my name is not Newcome!"

"Sir, you do me Hhonour," says Mr. Nadab, pulling up his shirt-collars, "and per'aps the day will come when the world will do me justice. May I put down your hhonoured name for my book of poems?"

"Of course, my dear sir," says the enthusiastic Colonel; "I'll send them all over India. Put me down for six copies, and do me the favour to bring them to-morrow when you come to dinner."

And now Mr. Hoskins asking if any gentleman would

volunteer a song, what was our amazement when the simple Colonel offered to sing himself, at which the room applauded vociferously; whilst methought poor Clive Newcome hung down his head, and blushed as red as a peony. I felt for the young lad, and thought what my own sensations would have been if, in that place, my own uncle, Major Pendennis, had suddenly proposed to exert his lyrical powers.

The Colonel selected the ditty of "Wapping Old Stairs" (a ballad so sweet and touching that surely any English poet might be proud to be the father of it), and he sang this quaint and charming old song in an exceedingly pleasant voice, with flourishes and roulades in the old Incledon manner, which has pretty nearly passed away. The singer gave his heart and soul to the simple ballad, and delivered Molly's gentle appeal so pathetically that even the professional gentlemen hummed and buzzed a sincere applause; and some wags, who were inclined to jeer at the beginning of the performance, clinked their glasses and rapped their sticks with quite a respectful enthusiasm. When the song was over, Clive held up his head too; after the shock of the first verse, looked round with surprise and pleasure in his eyes; and we, I need not say, backed our friend, delighted to see him come out of his queer scrape so triumphantly. The Colonel bowed and smiled with very pleasant good nature at our plaudits. It was like Dr. Primrose preaching his sermon in the prison. There was something touching in the *naïveté* and kindness of the placid and simple gentleman.

Great Hoskins, placed on high, amidst the tuneful choir, was pleased to signify his approbation, and gave his guest's health in his usual dignified manner. "I am much obliged to you, sir," says Mr. Hoskins; "the room ought to be much obliged to you: I drink your 'ealth and song, sir;" and he bowed to the Colonel politely over his glass of brandy-and-water, of which he absorbed a little in his customer's honour. "I have not heard that song," he was kind enough to say, "better performed since Mr. Incledon sung it. He was a great

singer, sir, and I may say, in the words of our immortal Shakespeare, that, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."

The Colonel blushed in his turn, and turning round to his boy with an arch smile, said, "I learnt it from Incledon. I used to slip out from Grey Friars to hear him, Heaven bless me, forty years ago, and I used to be flogged afterwards, and served me right too. Lord! Lord! how the time passes!" He drank off his sherry-and-water, and fell back in his chair: we could see he was thinking about his youth—the golden time—the happy, the bright, the unforgotten. I was myself nearly two-and-twenty years of age at that period, and felt as old as, ay, older than the Colonel.

Whilst he was singing his ballad, there had walked, or rather reeled, into the room, a gentleman in a military frock coat and duck trowsers of dubious hue, with whose name and person some of my readers are perhaps already acquainted. In fact it was my friend Captain Costigan, in his usual condition at this hour of the night.

Holding on by various tables, the Captain had sidled up, without accident to himself or any of the jugs and glasses round about him, to the table where we sat, and had taken his place near the writer, his old acquaintance. He warbled the refrain of the Colonel's song, not inharmoniously; and saluted its pathetic conclusion with a subdued hiccup and a plentiful effusion of tears. "Be-dad, it is a beautiful song," says he, "and many a time I heard poor Harry Incledon sing it."

"He's a great character," whispered that unlucky King of Corpus to his neighbour the Colonel; "was a Captain in the army. We call him the General. Captain Costigan, will you take something to drink?"

"Bedad, I will," says the Captain, "and I'll sing ye a song tu."

And, having procured a glass of whisky-and-water from the passing waiter, the poor old man, settling his face into a horrid grin, and leering, as he was wont, when he gave what he called one of his prime songs, began his music.

The unlucky wretch, who scarcely knew what he was doing or saying, selected one of the most outrageous performances of his *répertoire*, fired off a tipsy howl by way of overture, and away he went. At the end of the second verse the Colonel started up, clapping on his hat, seizing his stick, and looking as ferocious as though he had been going to do battle with a Pindaree. "Silence!" he roared out.

"Hear, hear!" cried certain wags at a farther table. "Go on, Costigan!" said others.

"Go on!" cries the Colonel, in his high voice, trembling with anger. "Does any gentleman say 'Go on?' Does any man who has a wife and sisters, or children at home, say 'Go on' to such disgusting ribaldry as this? Do you dare, sir, to call yourself a gentleman, and to say that you hold the King's commission, and to sit down amongst Christians and men of honour, and defile the ears of young boys with this wicked balderdash?"

"Why do you bring young boys here, old boy?" cries a voice of the malcontents.

"Why? Because I thought I was coming to a society of gentlemen," cried out the indignant Colonel. "Because I never could have believed that Englishmen could meet together and allow a man, and an old man, so to disgrace himself. For shame, you old wretch! Go home to your bed, you hoary old sinner! And for my part, I'm not sorry that my son should see, for once in his life, to what shame and degradation and dishonour, drunkenness and whisky may bring a man. Never mind the change, sir!—Curse the change!" says the Colonel, facing the amazed waiter. "Keep it till you see me in this place again; which will be never—by George, never!" And shouldering his stick, and scowling round at the company of scared bacchanalians, the indignant gentleman stalked away, his boy after him.

Clive seemed rather shamefaced; but I fear the rest of the company looked still more foolish.

"Aussi que diable venait-il faire dans cette galère?" says King of Corpus to Jones of Trinity; and Jones

gave a shrug of his shoulders, which were smarting, perhaps; for that uplifted cane of the Colonel's had somehow fallen on the back of every man in the room.

COLONEL NEWCOME'S LAST SONG

(Chapters XII, XIII)

[Colonel Newcome resumes the acquaintance which he has made at the Cave of Harmony, adding thereto the acquaintance of his brother-in-law, Honeyman, a popular preacher, and his son's friend, John James Ridley, an artist, a butler's son, and a genius. Despite certain prejudices he attaches himself warmly to this society, having found his reception by his rich brothers, the two great bankers, the reverse of warm. Being the only gentleman of his family he is treated "as a kind of bear." His nephew Barnes, the rising hope of the bankers, is especially exquisite and intolerable. Nevertheless, with characteristic simplicity, the Colonel trles to make a dinner party out of both sets together, with the results which follow.]

John James had opened the door, hastening to welcome a friend and patron, the sight of whom always gladdened the youth's eyes; no other than Clive Newcome—in young Ridley's opinion, the most splendid, fortunate, beautiful, high-born, and gifted youth this island contained. What generous boy in his time has not worshipped somebody? Before the female enslaver makes her appearance, every lad has a friend of friends, a crony of cronies, to whom he writes immense letters in vacation, whom he cherishes in his heart of hearts; whose sister he proposes to marry in after life; whose purse he shares; for whom he will take a thrashing if need be: who is his hero. Clive was John James' youthful divinity: when he wanted to draw Thaddeus of Warsaw, a Prince, Ivanhoe, or some one splendid and egregious, it was Clive he took for a model. His heart leapt when he saw the young fellow. He would walk cheerfully to Grey Friars, with a letter or message for Clive, on the chance of seeing him, and getting a kind

word from him, or a shake of the hand. An ex-butler of Lord Todmorden was a pensioner in the Grey Friars Hospital (it has been said that at that ancient establishment is a college for old men as well as for boys), and this old man would come sometimes to his successor's Sunday dinner, and grumble from the hour of that meal until nine o'clock, when he was forced to depart, so as to be within Grey Friars' gates before ten; grumble about his dinner—grumble about his beer—grumble about the number of chapels he had to attend, about the gown he wore, about the Master's treatment of him, about the want of plums in the pudding, as old men and schoolboys grumble. It was wonderful what a liking John James took to this odious, querulous, graceless, stupid, and snuffy old man, and how he would find pretexts for visiting him at his lodging in the old hospital. He actually took that journey that he might have a chance of seeing Clive. He sent Clive notes and packets of drawings; thanked him for books lent, asked advice about future reading—anything, so that he might have a sight of his pride, his patron, his paragon.

I am afraid Clive Newcome employed him to smuggle rum-shrub and cigars into the premises; giving him appointments in the school precincts, where young Clive would come and stealthily receive the forbidden goods. The poor lad was known by the boys, and called Newcome's Punch. He was all but hunchbacked; long and lean in the arm; sallow, with a great forehead, and waving black hair, and large melancholy eyes.

"What, is it you, J. J.?" cries Clive, gaily, when his humble friend appears at the door. "Father, this is my friend Ridley. This is the fellow what *can* draw."

"I know whom I will back against any young man of his size at *that*," says the Colonel, looking at Clive fondly. He considered there was not such a genius in the world; and had already thought of having some of Clive's drawings published by M'Lean of the Haymarket.

"This is my father just come from India—and Mr. Pendennis, an old Grey Friars man. Is my uncle at home?" Both these gentlemen bestow rather patroniz-

ing nods of the head on the lad introduced to them as J. J. His exterior is but mean-looking. Colonel Newcome, one of the humblest-minded men alive, has yet his old-fashioned military notions; and speaks to a butler's son as to a private soldier, kindly, but not familiarly.

"Mr. Honeyman is at home, gentlemen," the young lad says, humbly. "Shall I show you up to his room?" And we walk up the stairs after our guide. We find Mr. Honeyman deep in study on the sofa, with *Pearson on the Creed* before him. The novel has been whipped under the pillow. Clive found it there some short time afterwards, during his uncle's temporary absence in his dressing-room. He has agreed to suspend his Theological studies, and go out with his brother-in-law to dine.

As Clive and his friends were at Honeyman's door, and just as we were entering to see the divine seated in state before his folio, Clive whispers, "J. J., come along, old fellow, and show us some drawings. What are you doing?"

"I was doing some Arabian Nights," says J. J., "up in my room; and, hearing a knock which I thought was yours, I came down."

"Show us the pictures. Let's go up into your room," cries Clive.

"What—will you?" says the other. "It is but a very small place."

"Never mind, come along," says Clive; and the two lads disappear together, leaving the three grown gentlemen to discourse together, or rather two of us to listen to Honeyman, who expatiates upon the beauty of the weather, the difficulties of the clerical calling, the honour Colonel Newcome does him by a visit, etc., with his usual eloquence.

After a while Clive comes down without J. J. from the upper regions. He is greatly excited. "Oh, sir," he says to his father, "you talk about my drawings—you should see J. J.'s! By Jove, that fellow is a genius. They are beautiful, sir. You seem actually to read the

'Arabian Nights,' you know, only in pictures. There is Scheherazade telling the stories, and—what do you call her?—Dinarzade and the Sultan sitting in bed and listening. Such a grim old cove! You see he has cut off ever so many of his wives' heads. I can't think where that chap gets his ideas from. I can beat him in drawing horses, I know, and dogs; but I can only draw what I see. Somehow he seems to see things we don't, don't you know? Oh, father, I'm determined I'd rather be a painter than anything." And he falls to drawing horses and dogs at his uncle's table, round which the elders are seated.

"I've settled it upstairs with J. J.," says Clive, working away with his pen. "We shall take a studio together; perhaps we will go abroad together. Won't that be fun, father?"

"My dear Clive," remarks Mr. Honeyman, with bland dignity, "there are degrees in society which we must respect. You surely cannot think of being a professional artist. Such a profession is very well for your young protégé; but for you——"

"What for me?" cries Clive. "We are no such great folks that I know of; and if we were, I say a painter is as good as a lawyer, or a doctor, or even a soldier. In Dr. Johnson's life—which my father is always reading—I like to read about Sir Joshua Reynolds best: I think he is the best gentleman of all in the book! My! wouldn't I like to paint a picture like Lord Heathfield in the National Gallery! *Wouldn't* I just! I think I would sooner have done that, than have fought at Gibraltar. And those Three Graces—oh, aren't they graceful! and that Cardinal Beaufort at Dulwich! it frightens me so, I daren't look at it. Wasn't Reynolds a clipper! that's all! and wasn't Rubens a brick? He was an ambassador and knight of the Bath; so was Vandyke. And Titian, and Raphael, and Velasquez?—I'll just trouble you to show me better gentlemen than them, Uncle Charles."

"Far be it from me to say that the pictorial calling is not honourable," says Uncle Charles; "but as the

world goes there are other professions in greater repute; and I should have thought Colonel Newcome's son——"

"He shall follow his own bent," said the Colonel; "as long as his calling is honest, it becomes a gentleman; and if he were to take a fancy to play on the fiddle—actually on the fiddle—I shouldn't object."

"Such a rum chap there was upstairs!" Clive resumes, looking up from his scribbling. He was walking up and down on the landing in a dressing-gown with scarcely any other clothes on, holding a plate in one hand, and a pork-chop he was munching with the other. Like this" (and Clive draws a figure). "What do you think, sir? He was in the 'Cave of Harmony,' he says, that night you flared up about Captain Costigan. He knew me at once; and he says, 'Sir, your father acted like a gentleman, a Christian, and a man of honour. *Maxima debetur puero reverentia.* Give him my compliments. I don't know his highly respectable name.' His highly respectable name," says Clive, cracking with laughter—"those were his very words. 'And inform him that I am an orphan myself—in needy circumstances'—he said he was in needy circumstances; 'and I heartily wish he'd adopt me.'"

The lad puffed out his face, made his voice as loud and as deep as he could; and from his imitation and the picture he had drawn, I knew at once that Fred Bayham was the man he mimicked.

"And does the Red Rover live here," cried Mr. Pendennis, "and have we earthed him at last?"

"He sometimes comes here," Mr. Honeyman said, with a careless manner. "My landlord and landlady were butler and housekeeper to his father, Bayham of Bayham, one of the oldest families in Europe. And Mr. Frederick Bayham, the exceedingly eccentric person of whom you speak, was a private pupil of my own dear father in our happy days at Borehambury."

He had scarcely spoken when a knock was heard at the door, and before the occupant of the lodgings could say "Come in!" Mr. Frederick Bayham made his

appearance, arrayed in that peculiar costume which he affected. In those days we wore very tall stocks, only a very few poetic and eccentric persons venturing on the Byron collar; but Fred Bayham confined his neck by a simple ribbon, which allowed his great red whiskers to curl freely round his capacious jowl. He wore a black frock and a large broad-brimmed hat, and looked somewhat like a Dissenting preacher. At other periods you would see him in a green coat and a blue neckcloth, as if the turf or the driving of coaches was his occupation.

"I have heard from the young man of the house who you were, Colonel Newcome," he said with the greatest gravity, "and happened to be present, sir, the other night; for I was aweary, having been toiling all the day in literary labour, and needed some refreshment. I happened to be present, sir, at a scene which did you the greatest honour, and of which I spoke, not knowing you, with something like levity to your son. He is an *ingenui vultus puer ingenuique pudoris*—Pendennis, how are you?—and I thought, sir, I would come down and tender an apology if I had said any words that might savour of offence to a gentleman who was in the right, as I told the room when you quitted it, as Mr. Pendennis, I am sure, will remember."

Mr, Pendennis looked surprise, and perhaps negation.

"You forget, Pendennis? Those who quit that room, sir, often forget on the morrow what occurred during the revelry of the night. You did right in refusing to return to that scene. We public men are obliged often to seek our refreshment at hours when luckier individuals are lapt in slumber."

"And what may be your occupation, Mr. Bayham?" asked the Colonel rather gloomily, for he had an idea that Bayham was adopting a strain of *persiflage* which the Indian gentleman by no means relished. Never saying aught but a kind word to any one, he was on fire at the notion that any should take a liberty with him.

"A barrister, sir, but without business—a literary man, who can but seldom find an opportunity to sell the

works of his brains—a gentleman, sir, who has met with neglect, perhaps merited, perhaps undeserved, from his family. I get my bread as best I may. On that evening I had been lecturing on the genius of some of our comic writers, at the Parthenopæon, Hackney. My audience was scanty, perhaps equal to my deserts. I came home on foot to an egg and a glass of beer after midnight, and witnessed the scene which did you so much honour. What is this? I fancy a ludicrous picture of myself"—he had taken up the sketch which Clive had been drawing—"I like fun, even at my own expense, and can afford to laugh at a joke which is meant in good humour."

This speech quite reconciled the honest Colonel. "I am sure the author of that, Mr. Bayham, means you or any man no harm. Why! the rascal, sir, has drawn me, his own father; and I have sent the drawing to Major Hobbs, who is in command of my regiment. Chinnery himself, sir, couldn't hit off a likeness better; he has drawn me on horseback, and he has drawn me on foot, and he has drawn my friend, Mr. Binnie, who lives with me. We have scores of his drawings at my lodgings; and if you will favour us by dining with us to-day, and these gentlemen, you shall see that you are not the only person caricatured by Clive here."

"I just took some little dinner upstairs, sir. I am a moderate man, and can live, if need be, like a Spartan; but to join such good company I will gladly use the knife and fork again. You will excuse the traveller's dress? I keep a room here, which I use only occasionally, and am at present lodging—in the country."

When Honeyman was ready, the Colonel, who had the greatest respect for the Church, would not hear of going out of the room before the clergyman, and took his arm to walk. Bayham then fell to Mr. Pendennis's lot, and they went together. Through Hill Street and Berkeley Square their course was straight enough; but at Hay Hill, Mr. Bayham made an abrupt tack larboard, engaging in a labyrinth of stables, and walking a long way round from Clifford Street, whither we were bound.

He hinted at a cab, but Pendennis refused to ride, being, in truth, anxious to see which way his eccentric companion would steer. "There are reasons," growled Bayham, "which need not be explained to one of your experience, why Bond Street must be avoided by some men peculiarly situated. The smell of Truefitt's pomatum makes me ill Tell me, Pendennis, is this Indian warrior a rajah of large wealth? Could he, do you think, recommend me to a situation in the East India Company? I would gladly take any honest post in which fidelity might be useful, genius might be appreciated, and courage rewarded. Here we are. The hotel seems comfortable. I never was in it before."

When we entered the Colonel's sitting-room at Nerot's, we found the waiter engaged in extending the table. "We are a larger party than I expected," our host said. "I met my brother Brian on horseback leaving cards at that great house in —— Street."

"The Russian Embassy," says Mr. Honeyman, who knew the town quite well.

"And he said he was disengaged and would dine with us," continues the Colonel.

"Am I to understand, Colonel Newcome," said Mr. Frederick Bayham, "that you are related to the eminent banker, Sir Brian Newcome, who gives such uncommonly swell parties in Park Lane?"

"What is a swell party?" asked the Colonel laughing, "I dined with my brother last Wednesday; and it was a very grand dinner certainly. The Governor-General himself could not give a more splendid entertainment. But, do you know, I scarcely had enough to eat? I don't eat side-dishes; and as for the roast-beef of old England, why, the meat was put on the table and whisked away like Sancho's inauguration feast at Barataria. We did not dine till nine o'clock. I like a few glasses of claret and a cosy talk after dinner; but—well, well"—(no doubt the worthy gentleman was accusing himself of telling tales out of school and had come to a timely repentance). "Our dinner, I hope, will be different. James Binnie will take care of that. That

fellow is full of anecdote and fun. You will meet one or two more of our service: Sir Thomas de Boots, who is not a bad chap over a glass of wine; Mr. Pendennis's chum, Mr. Warrington, and my nephew, Barnes Newcome—a dry fellow at first, but I daresay he has good about him when you know him; almost every man has," said the good-natured philosopher. "Clive, you rogue, mind and be moderate with the champagne, sir!"

"Champagne's for women," says Clive. "I stick to claret."

"I say, Pendennis," here Bayham remarked, "it is my deliberate opinion that F. B. has got into a good thing."

Mr. Pendennis seeing there was a great party, was for going home to his chambers to dress. "H'm!" says Mr. Bayham, "don't see the necessity. What right-minded man looks at the exterior of his neighbour? He looks *here*, sir, and examines *there*," and Bayham tapped his forehead, which was expansive, and then his heart, which he considered to be in the right place.

"What is this I hear about dressing?" asks our host. "Dine in your frock, my good friend, and welcome, if your dress-coat is in the country."

"It is at present at an uncle's," Mr. Bayham said, with great gravity, "and I take your hospitality as you offer it, Colonel Newcome, cordially and frankly."

Honest Mr. Binnie made his appearance a short time before the appointed hour for receiving the guests, arrayed in a tight little pair of trousers, and white silk stockings and pumps, his bald head shining like a billiard-ball, his jolly gills rosy with good humour. He was bent on pleasure. "Hey, lads!" says he; "but we'll make a night of it. We haven't had a night since the farewell dinner off Plymouth."

"And a jolly night it was, James," ejaculates the Colonel.

"Egad, what a song that Tom Morris sings!"

"And your 'Jock o' Hazeldean' is as good as a play, James."

"And I think you beat iny one I iver hard in 'Tom Bowling,' yourself, Tom!" cries the Colonel's delighted chum. Mr. Pendennis opened the eyes of astonishment at the idea of the possibility of renewing these festivities, but he kept the lips of prudence closed. And now the carriages began to drive up, and the guests of Colonel Newcome to arrive.

The earliest comers were the first mate and the medical officer of the ship in which the two gentlemen had come to England. The mate was a Scotchman; the Doctor was a Scotchman; of the gentlemen from the Oriental Club, three were Scotchmen.

The Southerons, with one exception, were the last to arrive, and for a while we stood looking out of the windows awaiting their coming. The first mate pulled out a penknife, and arranged his nails. The Doctor and Mr. Binnie talked of the progress of medicine. Binnie had walked the hospitals of Edinburgh before getting his civil appointment to India. The three gentlemen from Hanover Square and the Colonel had plenty to say about Tom Smith of the Cavalry, and Harry Hall of the Engineers: how Topham was going to marry poor little Bob Wallis's widow; how many lakhs Barber had brought home, and the like. The tall grey-headed Englishman, who had been in the East too, in the King's service, joined for a while in this conversation, but presently left it, and came and talked with Clive. "I knew your father in India," said the gentleman to the lad; "There is not a more gallant or respected officer in that service. I have a boy too, a stepson, who has just gone into the army; he is older than you; he was born at the end of the Waterloo year, and so was a great friend of his and mine, who was at your school, Sir Rawdon Crawley."

"He was in Gown Boys, I know," says the boy; "succeeded his uncle Pitt, fourth Baronet. I don't know how his mother—her who wrote the hymns, you know, and goes to Mr. Honeyman's chapel—comes to be Rebecca, Lady Crawley. His father, Colonel Rawdon

Crawley, died at Coventry Island, in August, 182—, and his uncle, Sir Pitt, not till September here. I remember, we used to talk about it at Grey Friars, when I was quite a little chap; and there were bets whether Crawley, I mean the young one, was a Baronet or not."

"When I sailed to Rigy, Cornel," the first mate was speaking—nor can any spelling nor combination of letters of which I am master reproduce this gentleman's accent when he was talking his best—"I racklackt they used always to sairve us a drem before denner. And as your frinds are kipping the denner, and as I've no watch to-night, I'll jist do as we used to do at Rigy. James, my fine fellow, jist look alive and breng me a small glass of brandy, will ye? Did ye iver try a brandy cock-tail, Cornel? Whin I sailed on the New York line, we used jest to make bits before denner; and—thank ye, James" —and he tossed off a glass of brandy.

Here a waiter announces, in a loud voice, "Sir Thomas de Boots," and the General enters, scowling round the room according to his fashion, very red in the face, very tight in the girth, splendidly attired with a choking white neckcloth, a voluminous waistcoat, and his orders on.

"Stars and garters, by jingo!" cries Mr. Frederick Bayham; "I say, Pendennis, have you any idea, is the Duke coming? I wouldn't have come in these Bluchers if I had known it. Confound it, no—Hoby himself, my own bootmaker, wouldn't have allowed poor F. B. to appear in Bluchers, if he had known that I was going to meet the Duke. My linen's all right, anyhow;" and F. B. breathed a thankful prayer for that. Indeed, who but the very curious could tell that not F. B.'s, but C. H.'s—Charles Honeyman's—was the mark upon that decorous linen?

Colonel Newcome introduced Sir Thomas to every one in the room, as he had introduced us all to each other previously; and as Sir Thomas looked at one after another, his face was kind enough to assume an expression which seemed to ask, "And who the devil are you,

sir?" as clearly as though the General himself had given utterance to the words. With the gentleman in the window talking to Clive he seemed to have some acquaintance, and said, not unkindly, "How d'you do, Dobbin?"

The carriage of Sir Brian Newcome now drove up, from which the Baronet descended in state, leaning upon the arm of the Apollo in plush and powder, who closed the shutters of the great coach, and mounted by the side of the coachman, laced and periwigged. The Bench of Bishops has given up its wigs; cannot the box, too, be made to resign that insane decoration? Is it necessary for our comfort, that the men who do our work in stable or household, should be dressed like Merry-Andrews? Enter Sir Brian Newcome, smiling blandly; he greets his brother affectionately, Sir Thomas gaily; he nods and smiles to Clive, and graciously permits Mr. Pendennis to take hold of two fingers of his extended right hand. That gentleman is charmed, of course, with the condescension. What man could be otherwise than happy to be allowed a momentary embrace of two such precious fingers? When a gentleman so favours me, I always ask, mentally, why he has taken the trouble at all, and regret that I have not had the presence of mind to poke one finger against his two. If I were worth ten thousand a year, I cannot help inwardly reflecting, and kept a large account in Threadneedle Street, I cannot help thinking he would have favoured me with the whole palm.

The arrival of these two grandees has somehow cast a solemnity over the company. The weather is talked about: brilliant in itself, it does not occasion very brilliant remarks among Colonel Newcome's guests. Sir Brian really thinks it must be as hot as it is in India. Sir Thomas de Boots, swelling in his white waistcoat, in the armholes of which his thumbs are engaged, smiles scornfully, and wishes Sir Brian had ever felt a good sweltering day in the hot winds in India. Sir Brian withdraws the untenable proposition that London is as hot as Calcutta. Mr. Binnie looks at his watch, and at

the Colonel. "We have only your nephew, Tom, to wait for," he says; "I think we may make so bold as to order the dinner"—a proposal heartily seconded by Mr. Frederick Bayham.

The dinner appears steaming, borne by steaming waiters. The grandees take their places, one on each side of the Colonel. He begs Mr. Honeyman to say grace, and stands reverentially during that brief ceremony, while De Boots looks queerly at him from over his napkin. All the young men take their places at the further end of the table, round about Mr. Binnie; and, at the end of the second course, Mr. Barnes Newcome makes his appearance.

Mr. Barnes does not show the slightest degree of disturbance, although he disturbs all the company. Soup and fish are brought for him, and meat, which he leisurely eats, while twelve other gentlemen are kept waiting. We mark Mr. Binnie's twinkling eyes as they watch the young man. "Eh," he seems to say, "but that 's just about as free-and-easy a young chap as ever I set eyes on." And so Mr. Barnes *was* a cool young chap. That dish is so good, he must really have some more. He discusses the second supply leisurely; and turning round, simpering, to his neighbour, says, "I really hope I'm not keeping everybody waiting."

"Hem!" grunts the neighbour, Mr. Bayham, "it doesn't much matter, for we had all pretty well done dinner." Barnes takes a note of Mr. Bayham's dress—his long frock-coat, the ribbon round his neck; and surveys him with an admirable impudence. "Who are these people," thinks he, "my uncle has got together?" He bows graciously to the Colonel, who asks him to take wine. He is so insufferably affable, that every man near him would like to give him a beating.

All the time of the dinner the host was challenging everybody to drink wine, in his honest old-fashioned way, and Mr. Binnie seconding the chief entertainer. Such was the way in England and Scotland when they were young men. And when Binnie, asking Sir Brian, receives for reply from the Baronet—"Thank you, no,

my dear sir; I have exceeded already, positively exceeded;" the poor discomfited gentleman hardly knows whither to apply; but, luckily, Tom Norris, the first mate, comes to his rescue, and cries out, "Mr. Binnie, *I've* not had enough, and I'll drink a glass of anything ye like with ye." The fact is, that Mr. Norris *has* had enough. He has drunk bumpers to the health of every member of the company; his glass has been filled scores of times by watchful waiters. So has Mr. Bayham absorbed great quantities of drink; but without any visible effect on that veteran toper. So has young Clive taken more than is good for him. His cheeks are flushed and burning; he is chattering and laughing loudly at his end of the table. Mr. Warrington eyes the lad with some curiosity; and then regards Mr. Barnes with a look of scorn, which does not scorch that affable young person.

I am obliged to confess that the mate of the Indiaman, at an early period of the dessert, and when nobody had asked him for any such public expression of his opinion, insisted on rising and proposing the health of Colonel Newcome, whose virtues he lauded outrageously, and whom he pronounced to be one of the best of mortal men. Sir Brian looked very much alarmed at the commencement of this speech, which the mate delivered with immense shrieks and gesticulation: but the Baronet recovered during the course of the rambling oration, and, at its conclusion, gracefully tapped the table with one of those patronizing fingers; and lifting up a glass containing at least a thimbleful of claret, said, "My dear brother, I drink your health with all my heart, I'm su-ah." The youthful Barnes had uttered many "Hear, hears!" during the discourse, with an irony which, with every fresh glass of wine he drank, he cared less to conceal. And though Barnes had come late he had drunk largely, making up for lost time.

Those ironical cheers, and all his cousin's behaviour during dinner, had struck young Clive, who was growing very angry. He growled out remarks uncomplimentary to Barnes. His eyes, as he looked towards

his kinsman, flashed challenges, of which we who were watching him could see the warlike purport. Warrington looked at Bayham and Pendennis with glances of apprehension. We saw that danger was brooding, unless the one young man could be restrained from his impertinence, and the other from his wine.

Colonel Newcome said a very few words in reply to his honest friend the chief mate, and there the matter might have ended, but I am sorry to say Mr. Binnie now thought it necessary to rise and deliver himself of some remarks regarding the King's service, coupled with the name of Major-General Sir Thomas de Boots, K.C.B., etc.—the receipt of which that gallant officer was obliged to acknowledge in a confusion amounting almost to apoplexy. The glasses went whack—whack upon the hospitable board; the evening set in for public speaking. Encouraged by his last effort, Mr. Binnie now proposed Sir Brian Newcome's health; and that Baronet rose and uttered an exceedingly lengthy speech, delivered with his wine-glass on his bosom.

Then that sad rogue Bayham must get up, and call earnestly and respectfully for silence, and the chairman's hearty sympathy, for the few observations which he had to propose. "Our armies had been drunk with proper enthusiasm—such men as he beheld around him deserved the applause of all honest hearts, and merited the cheers with which their names had been received. ('Hear, hear!' from Barnes Newcome sarcastically. 'Hear, hear, HEAR!' fiercely from Clive.) But whilst we applauded our army, should we forget a profession still more exalted? Yes, still more exalted, I say in the face of the gallant General opposite; and that profession, I need not say, is the Church. (Applause.) Gentlemen, we have among us one who, while partaking largely of the dainties on this festive board, drinking freely of the sparkling wine-cup which our gallant friend's hospitality administers to us, sanctifies by his presence the feast of which he partakes, inaugurates with appropriate benedictions, and graces it, I may say, both before and after meat. Gentlemen, Charles Honey-

man was the friend of my childhood, his father the instructor of my early days. If Frederick Bayham's latter life has been chequered by misfortune, it may be that I have forgotten the precepts which the venerable parent of Charles Honeyman poured into an inattentive ear. He too, as a child, was not exempt from faults; as a young man, I am told, not quite free from youthful indiscretions. But in this present Anno Domini, we hail Charles Honeyman as a precept and an example, as a *decus fidei* and *lumen ecclesiæ* (as I told him in the confidence of the private circle this morning, and ere I ever thought to publish my opinion in this distinguished company). Colonel Newcome and Mr. Binnie! I drink to the health of the Reverend Charles Honeyman, A.M. May we listen to many more of his sermons, as well as to that admirable discourse with which I am sure he is about to electrify us now. May we profit by his eloquence; and cherish in our memories the truths which come mended from his tongue!" He ceased; poor Honeyman had to rise on his legs, and gasp out a few incoherent remarks in reply. Without a book before him, the Incumbent of Lady Whittlesea's Chapel was no prophet, and the truth is, he made poor work of his oration.

At the end of it, he, Sir Brian, Colonel Dobbin, and one of the Indian gentlemen quitted the room, in spite of the loud outcries of our generous host, who insisted that the party should not break up. "Close up, gentlemen," called out honest Newcome, "we are not going to part just yet. Let me fill your glass, General. You used to have no objection to a glass of wine." And he poured out a bumper for his friend, which the old campaigner sucked in with fitting gusto. "Who will give us a song? Binnie, give us the 'Laird of Cockpen.' It 's capital, my dear General. Capital," the Colonel whispered to his neighbour.

Mr. Binnie struck up the "Laird of Cockpen," without, I am bound to say, the least reluctance. He bobbed to one man, and he winked to another, and he tossed his glass, and gave all the points of his song in a

manner which did credit to his simplicity and his humour. You haughty Southerners little know how a jolly Scotch gentleman can *desipere in loco*, and how he chirrups over his honest cups. I do not say whether it was with the song or with Mr. Binnie that we were most amused. It was a good commonty, as Christopher Sly says; nor were we sorry when it was done.

Him the first mate succeeded; after which came a song from the redoubted F. Bayham, which he sang with a bass voice which Lablache might envy, and of which the chorus was frantically sung by the whole company. The cry was then for the Colonel; on which Barnes Newcome, who had been drinking much, started up with something like an oath, crying, "Oh, I can't stand this."

"Then leave it, confound you!" said young Clive, with fury in his face. "If our company is not good enough for you, why do you come into it?"

"What's that?" asks Barnes, who was evidently affected by wine. Bayham roared, "Silence!" and Barnes Newcome, looking round with a tipsy toss of the head, finally sat down.

The Colonel sang, as we have said, with a very high voice, using freely the falsetto, after the manner of the tenor-singers of his day. He chose one of his maritime songs, and got through the first verse very well, Barnes wagging his head at the chorus, with a "Bravo!" so offensive that Fred Bayham, his neighbour, gripped the young man's arm, and told him to hold his confounded tongue.

The Colonel began his second verse: and here, as will often happen to amateur singers, his falsetto broke down. He was not in the least annoyed, for I saw him smile very good-naturedly; and he was going to try the verse again, when that unlucky Barnes first gave a sort of crowing imitation of the song, and then burst into a yell of laughter. Clive dashed a glass of wine in his face at the next minute, glass and all; and no one who had watched the young man's behaviour was sorry for the insult.

I never saw a kind face express more terror than

Colonel Newcome's. He started back as if he had himself received the blow from his son. "Gracious God!" he cried out. "My boy insult a gentleman at my table!"

"I'd like to do it again," says Clive, whose whole body was trembling with anger.

"Are you drunk, sir?" shouted his father.

"The boy served the young fellow right, sir," growled Fred Bayham in his deepest voice. "Come along, young man. Stand up straight, and keep a civil tongue in your head next time, mind you, when you dine with gentlemen. It's easy to see," says Fred, looking round with a knowing air, "that this young man hasn't got the usages of society—he's not been accustomed to it:" and he led the dandy out.

Others had meanwhile explained the state of the case to the Colonel—including Sir Thomas de Boots, who was highly energetic and delighted with Clive's spirit; and some were for having the song to continue; but the Colonel, puffing his cigar, said, "No. My pipe is out. I will never sing again." So this history will record no more of Thomas Newcome's musical performances.

MR. GANDISH'S ART SCHOOL

(Chapter XVII)

[This extract is only introduced as an example of the exuberant incidental satire that breaks out everywhere in Thackeray's books. It has little or no connection with the actual story, except in so far as it emphasizes the fact that Clive Newcome decides to be an artist. This choice of the hero is indeed a very cunning device of the author. The object being to suggest that the Colonel and his son have the soul of breeding, while their brothers and cousins have only the pomp and occasion of it, no better point could have been made. There is no trade to which a real gentleman might more spontaneously turn, and none from which a sham gentleman (especially in those times) would more immediately shrink. On the whole, however, we introduce this passage for the sake of Gandish and not for the sake of Clive.]

British art either finds her peculiar nourishment in melancholy, and loves to fix her abode in desert places;

or, it may be, her purse is but slenderly furnished, and she is forced to put up with accommodations rejected by more prosperous callings. Some of the most dismal quarters of the town are colonized by her disciples and professors. In walking through streets which may have been gay and polite when ladies' chairmen jostled each other on the pavement, and link-boys with their torches lighted the beaux over the mud, who has not remarked the artist's invasion of those regions once devoted to fashion and gaiety? Centre-windows of drawing-rooms are enlarged so as to reach up into bed-rooms—bed-rooms where Lady Betty has had her hair powdered, and where the painter's north-light now takes possession of the place which her toilet-table occupied a hundred years ago. There are degrees in decadence: after the Fashion chooses to emigrate, and retreats from Soho or Bloomsbury, let us say, to Cavendish Square, physicians come and occupy the vacant houses, which still have a respectable look, the windows being cleaned, and the knockers and plates kept bright, and the doctor's carriage rolling round the square, almost as fine as the countess's, which has whisked away her ladyship to other regions. A boarding-house, mayhap, succeeds the physician, who has followed after his sick folks into the new country; and then Dick Tinto comes with his dingy brass-plate, and breaks in his north window, and sets up his sitters' throne. I love his honest moustache, and jaunty velvet jacket, his queer figure, his queer vanities, and his kind heart. Why should he not suffer his ruddy ringlets to fall over his shirt-collar? Why should he deny himself his velvet? it is but a kind of fustian which costs him eighteen-pence a yard. He is naturally what he is, and breaks out into costume as spontaneously as a bird sings, or a bulb bears a tulip. And as Dick, under yonder terrific appearance of waving cloak, bristling beard, and shadowy sombrero, is a good kindly simple creature, got up at a very cheap rate, so his life is consistent with his dress; he gives his genius a darkling swagger, and a romantic envelope, which, being removed, you find, not a bravo, but a kind chirping soul;

not a moody poet avoiding mankind for the better company of his own great thoughts, but a jolly little chap who has an aptitude for painting brocade-gowns, or bits of armour (with figures inside them), or trees and cattle, or gondolas and buildings, or what not; an instinct for the picturesque, which exhibits itself in his works, and outwardly on his person; beyond this, a gentle creature loving his friends, his cups, feasts, merrymakings, and all good things. The kindest folks alive I have found among those scowling whiskerandoes. They open oysters with their yataghans, toast muffins on their rapiers, and fill their Venice glasses with half-and-half. If they have money in their lean purses, be sure they have a friend to share it. What innocent gaiety, what jovial suppers on threadbare cloths, and wonderful songs after: what pathos, merriment, humour does not a man enjoy who frequents their company! Mr. Clive Newcome, who has long since shaved his beard, who has become a family man, and has seen the world in a thousand different phases, avers that his life as an art-student at home and abroad was the pleasantest part of his whole existence. It may not be more amusing in the telling than the chronicle of a feast, or the accurate report of two lovers' conversation; but the biographer, having brought his hero to this period of his life, is bound to relate it, before passing to other occurrences which are to be narrated in their turn.

We may be sure the boy had many conversations with his affectionate guardian as to the profession which he should follow. As regarded mathematical and classical learning, the elder Newcome was forced to admit that, out of every hundred boys, there were fifty as clever as his own, and at least fifty more industrious; the army in time of peace Colonel Newcome thought a bad trade for a young fellow so fond of ease and pleasure as his son: his delight in the pencil was manifest to all. Were not his school-books full of caricatures of the masters? Whilst his tutor, Grindley, was lecturing him, did he not draw Grindley instinctively under his very nose? A painter Clive was determined to be, and no-

thing else; and Clive, being then some sixteen years of age, began to study the art, *en règle*, under the eminent Mr. Gandish, of Soho.

It was that well-known portrait-painter, Andrew Smee, Esquire, R.A., who recommended Gandish to Colonel Newcome, one day when the two gentlemen met at dinner at Lady Ann Newcome's table. Mr. Smee happened to examine some of Clive's drawings, which the young fellow had executed for his cousins. Clive found no better amusement than in making pictures for them, and would cheerfully pass evening after evening in that diversion. He had made a thousand sketches of Ethel before a year was over; a year, every day of which seemed to increase the attractions of the fair young creature, develop her nymph-like form, and give her figure fresh graces. Also, of course, Clive drew Alfred and the nursery in general, Aunt Ann and the Blenheim spaniels, and Mr. Kuhn and his ear-rings, the majestic John bringing in the coal-scuttle, and all persons or objects in that establishment with which he was familiar. "What a genius the lad has," the complimentary Mr. Smee averred; "what a force and individuality there is in all his drawings! Look at his horses! capital, by Jove, capital! and Alfred on his pony, and Miss Ethel in her Spanish hat, with her hair flowing in the wind! I must take this sketch, I positively must now, and show it to Landseer." And the courtly artist daintily enveloped the drawing in a sheet of paper, put it away in his hat, and vowed subsequently that the great painter had been delighted with the young man's performance. Smee was not only charmed with Clive's skill as an artist, but thought his head would be an admirable one to paint. Such a rich complexion, such fine turns in his hair! such eyes! to see real blue eyes was so rare now-a-days! And the Colonel, too, if the Colonel would but give him a few sittings, the gray uniform of the Bengal cavalry, the silver lace, the little bit of red ribbon just to warm up the picture! it was seldom, Mr. Smee declared, that an artist could get such an opportunity for colour. With our hideous vermilion uniforms there was

no chance of doing anything; Rubens himself could scarcely manage scarlet. Look at the horseman in Cuyp's famous picture at the Louvre: the red was a positive blot upon the whole picture. There was nothing like French gray and silver! All which did not prevent Mr. Smee from painting Sir Brian in a flaring deputy-lieutenant's uniform, and entreating all military men whom he met to sit to him in scarlet. Clive Newcome the Academician succeeded in painting of course for mere friendship's sake, and because he liked the subject, though he could not refuse the cheque which Colonel Newcome sent him for the frame and picture; but no cajoleries could induce the old campaigner to sit to any artist save one. He said he should be ashamed to pay fifty guineas for the likeness of his homely face; he jocularly proposed to James Binnie to have his head put on the canvas, and Mr. Smee enthusiastically caught at the idea; but honest James winked his droll eyes, saying his was a beauty that did not want any paint; and when Mr. Smee took his leave after dinner in Fitzroy Square, where this conversation was held, James Binnie hinted that the Academician was no better than an old humbug, in which surmise he was probably not altogether incorrect. Certain young men who frequented the kind Colonel's house were also somewhat of this opinion; and made endless jokes at the painter's expense. Smee plastered his sitters with adulation as methodically as he covered his canvas. He waylaid gentlemen at dinner; he inveigled unsuspecting folks into his studio, and had their heads off their shoulders before they were aware. One day, on our way from the Temple, through Howland Street, to the Colonel's house, we beheld Major-General Sir Thomas de Boots, in full uniform, rushing from Smee's door to his brougham. The coachman was absent refreshing himself at a neighbouring tap: the little street-boys cheered and hurraed Sir Thomas, as, arrayed in gold and scarlet, he sat in his chariot. He blushed purple when he beheld us. No artist would have dared to imitate those purple tones; he was one of the numerous victims of Mr. Smee.

One day then, day to be noted with a white stone, Colonel Newcome, with his son and Mr. Smee, R.A., walked from the Colonel's house to Gandish's, which was not far removed thence; and young Clive, who was a perfect mimic, described to his friends, and illustrated, as was his wont, by diagrams, the interview which he had with that professor. "By Jove, you must see Gandish, Pen!" cries Clive: "Gandish is worth the whole world. Come and be an art-student. You'll find such jolly fellows there! Gandish calls it hart-student, and says, 'Hars est celare Hartem'—by Jove he does! He treated us to a little Latin, as he brought out a cake and a bottle of wine, you know.

"The governor was splendid, sir. He wore gloves: you know he only puts them on on parade days; and turned out for the occasion spick and span. He ought to be a general officer. He looks like a field-marshal—don't he? You should have seen him bowing to Mrs. Gandish and the Miss Gandishes, dressed all in their best, round the cake-tray! He takes his glass of wine, and sweeps them all round with a bow. 'I hope, young ladies,' says he, 'you don't often go to the students' room. I'm afraid the young gentlemen would leave off looking at the statues if you came in.' And so they would: for you never saw such Guys; but the dear old boy fancies every woman is a beauty.

"'Mr. Smee, you are looking at my picture of "Boadishia?"' says Gandish. Wouldn't he have caught it for his quantities at Grey Friars, that's all.

"'Yes—ah—yes,' says Mr. Smee, putting his hand over his eyes, and standing before it, looking steady, you know, as if he was going to see whereabouts he should *hit* 'Boadishia.'

"'It was painted when you were a young man, four years before you were an associate, Smee. Had some success in its time, and there's good pints about that pictur',' Gandish goes on. 'But I never could get my price for it; and here it hangs in my own room. 'Igh art won't do in this country, Colonel—it's a melancholy fact.'

"'High art! I should think it *is* high art!" whispers old Smee; 'fourteen feet high, at least!' And then out loud he says: 'The picture has very fine points in it, Gandish, as you say. Foreshortening of that arm, capital! That red drapery carried off into the right of the picture very skilfully managed!'

"'It's not like portrait-painting, Smee—'Igh art,' says Gandish. 'The models of the hancient Britons in that pictur' alone cost me thirty pound—when I was a struggling man, and had just married my Betsy here. You reckonise Boadishia, Colonel, with the Roman 'elmet, cuirass, and javeling of the period—all studied from the hantique, sir, the glorious hantique.'

"'All but Boadicea,' says father. 'She remains always young.' And he began to speak the lines out of Cowper, he did—waving his stick like an old trump—and famous they are," cries the lad:

> "'When the British warrior queen,
> Bleeding from the Roman rods'—

Jolly verses! Haven't I translated them into Alcaics?" says Clive, with a merry laugh, and resumes his history.

"'Oh, I *must* have those verses in my album,' cries one of the young ladies. 'Did you compose them, Colonel Newcome?' But Gandish, you see, is never thinking about any works but his own, and goes on, 'Study of my eldest daughter, exhibited 1816.'

"'No, Pa, not '16,' cries Miss Gandish. She don't look like a chicken, I can tell you.

"'Admired,' Gandish goes on, never heeding her.—'I can show you what the papers said of it at the time—*Morning Chronicle* and *Examiner*—spoke most 'ighly of it. My son as an infant 'Ercules, stranglin' the serpent over the piano. Fust conception of my picture of "Non Hangli sed Hangeli."'

"'For which I can guess who were the angels that sat,' says father. Upon my word that old governor! He is a little too strong. But Mr. Gandish listened no more to him than to Mr. Smee, and went on, buttering himself all over, as I have read the Hottentots do.

'Myself at thirty-three years of age!' says he, pointing to a portrait of a gentleman in leather breeches and mahogany boots; 'I could have been a portrait-painter, Mr. Smee.'

"'Indeed, it was lucky for some of us you devoted yourself to high art, Gandish,' Mr. Smee says, and sips the wine and puts it down again, making a face. It was not first-rate tipple, you see.

"'Two girls,' continues that indomitable Mr. Gandish. 'Hidea for "Babes in the Wood." "View of Pæstum," taken on the spot by myself, when travelling with the late lamented Earl of Kew. "Beauty, Valour, Commerce, and Liberty, condoling with Britannia on the death of Admiral Viscount Nelson,"—allegorical piece drawn at a very early age after Trafalgar. Mr. Fuseli saw that piece, sir, when I was a student of the Academy, and said to me, "Young man, stick to the antique. There 's nothing like it." Those were 'is very words. If you do me the favour to walk into the Hatrium, you'll remark my great pictures also from English 'ist'ry. An English 'istorical painter, sir, should be employed chiefly in English 'ist'ry. That 's what I would have done. Why ain't there temples for us, where the people might read their 'ist'ry at a glance, and without knowing how to read? Why is my "Alfred" 'anging up in this 'all? Because there is no patronage for a man who devotes himself to 'igh art. You know the anecdote, Colonel? King Alfred, flying from the Danes, took refuge in a neat-'erd's 'ut. The rustic's wife told him to bake a cake, and the fugitive sovering set down to his ignoble task, and forgetting it in the cares of state, let the cake burn, on which the woman struck him. The moment chose is when she is lifting her 'and to deliver the blow. The King receives it with majesty mingled with meekness. In the background the door of the 'ut is open, letting in the royal officers to announce the Danes are defeated. The daylight breaks in at the aperture, signifying the dawning of 'Ope. That story, sir, which I found in my researches in 'ist'ry, has since become so popular, sir, that hundreds of artists have

painted it, hundreds! I, who discovered the legend, have my picture—here!'

"'Now, Colonel,' says the showman, 'let me—let me lead you through the statue gallery. "Apollo," you see. The "Venus Hanadyomene," the glorious Venus of the Louvre, which I saw in 1814, Colonel, in its glory—the "Laocoon"—my friend Gibson's "Nymph," you see, is the only figure I admit among the antiques. Now up this stair to the students' room, where I trust my young friend, Mr. Newcome, will labour assiduously. *Ars longa est*, Mr. Newcome. *Vita*—'

"I trembled," Clive said, "lest my father should introduce a certain favourite quotation, beginning '*ingenuas didicisse*'—but he refrained, and we went into the room, where a score of students were assembled, who all looked away from their drawing-boards as we entered.

"'Here will be your place, Mr. Newcome,' says the Professor, 'and here that of your young friend—what did you say was his name?' I told him Ridley, for my dear old governor has promised to pay for J. J. too, you know. 'Mr. Chivers is the senior pupil and custos of the room in the absence of my son. Mr. Chivers, Mr. Newcome; gentlemen, Mr. Newcome, a new pupil. My son, Charles Gandish, Mr. Newcome. Assiduity, gentlemen, assiduity. *Ars longa. Vita brevis, et linea recta brevissima est.* This way, Colonel, down these steps, across the court-yard, to my own studio. There, gentlemen,'—and pulling aside a curtain, Gandish says —'There!'"

"And what was the masterpiece behind it?" we ask of Clive, after we have done laughing at his imitation.

"Hand round the hat, J. J.!" cries Clive. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, pay your money. Now walk in, for the performance is 'just a-going to begin.'" Nor would the rogue ever tell us what Gandish's curtained picture was.

Not a successful painter, Mr. Gandish was an excellent master, and regarding all artists, save one, perhaps a good critic. Clive and his friend J. J. came soon after, and commenced their studies under him. The one took

his humble seat at the drawing-board, a poor mean-looking lad, with worn clothes, downcast features, and a figure almost deformed; the other adorned by good health, good looks, and the best of tailors—ushered into the studio with his father and Mr. Smee as his aides-de-camp on his entry, and previously announced there with all the eloquence of honest Gandish. "I bet he 's 'ad cake and wine," says one youthful student, of an epicurean and satirical turn. "I bet he might have it every day if he liked." In fact, Gandish was always handing him sweetmeats of compliments and cordials of approbation. He had coat-sleeves with silk linings—he had studs in his shirt. How different was the texture and colour of that garment to the sleeves Bob Grimes displayed when he took his coat off to put on his working-jacket! Horses used actually to come for him to Gandish's door (which was situated in a certain lofty street in Soho). The Miss G.'s would smile at him from the parlour window as he mounted and rode splendidly off, and those opposition beauties, the Miss Levisons, daughters of the professor of dancing over the way, seldom failed to greet the young gentleman with an admiring ogle from their great black eyes. Master Clive was pronounced an "out-and-outer," a "swell and no mistake," and complimented, with scarce one dissentient voice, by the simple academy at Gandish's. Besides, he drew very well—there could be no doubt about that. Caricatures of the students, of course, were passing constantly among them, and in revenge for one which a huge red-haired Scotch student, Mr. Sandy M'Collop, had made of John James, Clive perpetrated a picture of Sandy which set the whole room in a roar; and when the Caledonian giant uttered satirical remarks against the assembled company, averring that they were a parcel of sneaks, a set of lick-spittles, and using epithets still more vulgar, Clive slipped off his fine silk-sleeved coat in an instant, invited Mr. M'Collop into the back-yard, instructed him in a science which the lad himself had acquired at Grey Friars, and administered two black eyes to Sandy, which prevented the young artist

from seeing for some days after the head of the "Laocoon" which he was copying. The Scotchman's superior weight and age might have given the combat a different conclusion, had it endured long after Clive's brilliant opening attack with his right and left; but Professor Gandish came out of his painting-room at the sound of battle, and could scarcely credit his own eyes when he saw those of poor M'Collop so darkened. To do the Scotchman justice, he bore Clive no rancour. They became friends there, and afterwards at Rome, whither they subsequently went to pursue their studies. The fame of Mr. M'Collop as an artist has long since been established. His pictures of "Lord Lovat in prison" and "Hogarth painting him," of the "Blowing-up of the Kirk of Field" (painted for M'Collop of M'Collop), of the "Torture of the Covenanters," the "Murder of the Regent," the "Murder of Rizzio," and other historical pieces, all of course from Scotch history, have established his reputation in South as well as in North Britain. No one would suppose, from the gloomy character of his works, that Sandy M'Collop is one of the most jovial souls alive. Within six months after their little difference, Clive and he were the greatest of friends, and it was by the former's suggestion that Mr. James Binnie gave Sandy his first commission, who selected the cheerful subject of "The Young Duke of Rothesay starving in Prison."

During this period, Mr. Clive assumed the *toga virilis*, and beheld with inexpressible satisfaction the first growth of those mustachios which have since given him such a marked appearance. Being at Gandish's, and so near the dancing academy, what must he do but take lessons in the Terpischorean art too?—making himself as popular with the dancing folks as with the drawing folks, and the jolly king of his company everywhere. He gave entertainments to his fellow-students in the upper chambers in Fitzroy Square, which were devoted to his use, inviting his father and Mr. Binnie to those parties now and then. And songs were sung, and pipes were smoked, and many a pleasant supper eaten. There

was no stint: but no excess. No young man was ever seen to quit those apartments the worse, as it is called, for liquor. Fred Bayham's uncle, the bishop, could not be more decorous than F. B. as he left the Colonel's house, for the Colonel made that one of the conditions of his son's hospitality, that nothing like intoxication should ensue from it. The good gentleman did not frequent the parties of the juniors. He saw that his presence rather silenced the young men; and left them to themselves, confiding in Clive's parole, and went away to play his rubber of whist at the Club. And many a time he heard the young fellow's step tramping by his bedchamber door, as he lay wakeful within, happy to think his son was happy.

THE DUEL OF LORD KEW

(From Chapter XXXIV)

[Through all this time Clive Newcome has been slowly falling in love with the sister of his enemy, Barnes. Ethel Newcome, spirited and magnanimous yet worldly and riveted to her class, has never disguised her friendly feeling for him or her affection for the old Colonel. When, however, the Countess of Kew, the omnipotent grandmother, decides that Ethel shall marry young Lord Kew, a careless and sociable creature, wasting his own considerable kindness and common sense, Ethel submits like a princess to a royal marriage. Clive, who is Kew's friend, immediately departs to paint in Italy; but he leaves a tragedy behind him. The rest of the family, including Kew and Ethel, are assembled at Baden, within the circle of influence of the Duchesse d'Ivry, a morbid aristocratic wanton who models herself on Mary Queen of Scots, and who has been one of the unfortunate episodes in Lord Kew's earlier life. The following scene takes place at a ball.]

There was in the Duchess's court a young fellow from the South of France, whose friends had sent him to *faire son droit* at Paris, where he had gone through the usual course of pleasures and studies of the young inhabitants of the Latin Quarter. He had at one time exalted republican opinions, and had fired his shot with

distinction at St. Méri. He was a poet of some little note—a book of his lyrics, "Les Râles d'un Asphyxié," having made a sensation at the time of their appearance. He drank great quantities of absinthe of a morning, smoked incessantly, played roulette whenever he could get a few pieces, contributed to a small journal, and was especially great in his hatred of *l'infâme Angleterre*. *Delenda est Carthago* was tattooed beneath his shirt-sleeve. Fifine and Clarisse, young milliners of the students' district, had punctured this terrible motto on his manly right arm. *Le léopard*, emblem of England, was his aversion; he shook his fist at the caged monster in the Garden of Plants. He desired to have "Here lies an enemy of England" engraved upon his early tomb. He was skilled at billiards and dominoes, adroit in the use of arms, of unquestionable courage and fierceness. Mr. Jones of England was afraid of M. de Castillonnes, and cowered before his scowls and sarcasms. Captain Blackball, the other English aide-de-camp of the Duchesse d'Ivry, a warrior of undoubted courage, who had been "on the ground" more than once, gave him a wide berth, and wondered what the little beggar meant when he used to say, "Since the days of the Prince Noir, Monsieur, my family has been at feud with l'Angleterre!" His family were grocers at Bordeaux, and his father's name was M. Cabasse. Cabasse had married a noble in the revolutionary times; and the son at Paris called himself Victor Cabasse de Castillonnes; then Victor C. de Castillonnes; then M. de Castillonnes. One of the followers of the Black Prince had insulted a lady of the house of Castillonnes, when the English were lords of Guienne; hence our friend's wrath against the Leopard. He had written, and afterwards dramatized, a terrific legend describing the circumstances, and the punishment of the Briton by a knight of the Castillonnes family. A more awful coward never existed in a melodrama than that felon English knight. His *blanche fille*, of course, died of hopeless love for the conquering Frenchman, her father's murderer. The paper in which the feuilleton appeared, died at the sixth number of the

story. The theatre of the Boulevard refused the drama; so the author's rage against *l'infâme Albion* was yet unappeased. On beholding Miss Newcome, Victor had fancied a resemblance between her and Agnes de Calverley, the blanche Miss of his novel and drama, and cast an eye of favour upon the young creature. He even composed verses in her honour (for I presume that the "Miss Betti" and the Princesse Crimhilde of the poems which he subsequently published, were no other than Miss Newcome, and the Duchess, her rival). He had been one of the lucky gentlemen who had danced with Ethel on the previous evening. On the occasion of the ball, he came to her with a high-flown compliment, and a request to be once more allowed to waltz with her—a request to which he expected a favourable answer, thinking, no doubt, that his wit, his powers of conversation, and the *amour qui flambait dans son regard*, had had their effect upon the charming Meess. Perhaps he had a copy of the very verses in his breast-pocket, with which he intended to complete his work of fascination. For her sake alone, he had been heard to say that he would enter into a truce with England, and forget the hereditary wrongs of his race.

But the blanche Miss on this evening declined to waltz with him. His compliments were not of the least avail. He retired with them and his unuttered verses in his crumpled bosom. Miss Newcome only danced in one quadrille with Lord Kew, and left the party quite early, to the despair of many of the bachelors, who lost the fairest ornament of their ball.

Lord Kew, however, had been seen walking with her in public, and particularly attentive to her during her brief appearance in the ball-room; and the old Dowager, who regularly attended all places of amusement, and was at twenty parties and six dinners the week before she died, thought fit to be particularly gracious to Madame d'Ivry upon this evening, and, far from shunning the Duchesse's presence or being rude to her, as on former occasions, was entirely smiling and good-humoured. Lady Kew, too, thought there had been a

reconciliation between Ethel and her cousin. Lady Ann had given her mother some account of the handshaking. Kew's walk with Ethel, the quadrille which she had danced with him alone, induced the elder lady to believe that matters had been made up between the young people.

So, by way of showing the Duchesse that her little shot of the morning had failed in its effect, as Frank left the room with his cousin, Lady Kew gaily hinted, "that the young earl was aux petits soins with Miss Ethel; that she was sure her old friend, the Duc d'Ivry, would be glad to hear that his godson was about to range himself. He would settle down on his estates. He would attend to his duties as an English peer and a country gentleman. We shall go home," says the benevolent Countess, "and kill the veau gras, and you shall see our dear prodigal will become a very quiet gentleman."

The Duchesse said "My Lady Kew's plan was most edifying. She was charmed to hear that Lord Kew loved veal; there were some who thought that meat rather insipid." A waltzer came to claim her hand at this moment; and as she twirled round the room upon that gentleman's arm, wafting odours as she moved, her pink silks, pink feathers, pink ribbons, making a mighty rustling, the Countess of Kew had the satisfaction of thinking that she had planted an arrow in that shrivelled little waist which Count Punter's arms embraced, and had returned the stab which Madame d'Ivry had delivered in the morning.

Mr. Barnes, and his elect bride, had also appeared, danced, and disappeared. Lady Kew soon followed her young ones; and the ball went on very gaily, in spite of the absence of these respectable personages.

Being one of the managers of the entertainment, Lord Kew returned to it after conducting Lady Ann and her daughter to their carriage, and now danced with great vigour, and with his usual kindness, selecting those ladies whom other waltzers rejected, because they were too old, or too plain, or too stout, or what not.

But he did not ask Madame d'Ivry to dance. He could condescend to dissemble so far as to hide the pain which he felt; but did not care to engage in that more advanced hypocrisy of friendship, which, for her part, his old grandmother had not shown the least scruple in assuming.

Amongst other partners, my lord selected that intrepid waltzer, the Gräfin von Gumpelheim, who, in spite of her age, size, and large family, never lost a chance of enjoying her favourite recreation. "Look with what a camel my lord waltzes," said M. Victor to Madame d'Ivry, whose slim waist he had the honour of embracing to the same music. "What man but an Englishman would ever select such a dromedary?"

"Avant de se marier," said Madame d'Ivry, "il faut avouer que my lord se permet d'énormes distractions."

"My lord marries himself! And when and whom?" cries the Duchesse's partner.

"Miss Newcome. Do you not approve of his choice? I thought the eyes of Stenio" (the Duchesse called M. Victor, Stenio) "looked with some favour upon that little person. She is handsome, even very handsome. Is it not so often in life, Stenio? Are not youth and innocence (I give Miss Ethel the compliment of her innocence, now surtout that the little painter is dismissed) —are we not cast into the arms of jaded roués? Tender young flowers, are we not torn from our convent gardens, and flung into a world of which the air poisons our pure life, and withers the sainted buds of hope and love and faith? Faith! The mocking world tramples on it, n'est-ce pas? Love! The brutal world strangles the heaven-born infant at its birth. Hope! It smiled at me in my little convent chamber, played among the flowers which I cherished, warbled with the birds that I loved. But it quitted me at the door of the world, Stenio. It folded its white wings and veiled its radiant face! In return for my young love they gave me—sixty years, the dregs of a selfish heart, egotism cowering over its fire, and cold for all its mantle of ermine! In place of the sweet flowers of my young years, they gave me these,

Stenio!" and she pointed to her feathers and her artificial roses. "Oh, I should like to crush them under my feet!" and she put out the neatest little slipper. The Duchesse was great upon her wrongs, and paraded her blighted innocence to every one who would feel interested by that piteous spectacle. The music here burst out more swiftly and melodiously than before; the pretty little feet forgot their desire to trample upon the world. She shrugged the lean little shoulders—"Eh!" said the Queen of Scots, "dansons et oublions;" and Stenio's arm once more surrounded her fairy waist (she called herself a fairy; other ladies called her a skeleton;) and they whirled away in the waltz again: and presently she and Stenio came bumping up against the stalwart Lord Kew and the ponderous Madame de Gumpelheim, as a wherry dashes against the oaken ribs of a steamer.

The little couple did not fall; they were struck on to a neighbouring bench, luckily: but there was a laugh at the expense of Stenio and the Queen of Scots—and Lord Kew, settling his panting partner on to a seat, came up to make excuses for his awkwardness to the lady who had been its victim. At the laugh produced by the catastrophe, the Duchesse's eyes gleamed with anger.

"M. de Castillonnes," she said, to her partner, "have you had any quarrel with that Englishman?"

"With ce Milor? But no," said Stenio.

"He did it on purpose. There has been no day but his family has insulted me!" hissed out the Duchesse, and at this moment Lord Kew came up to make his apologies. He asked a thousand pardons of Madame la Duchesse for being so maladroit.

"Maladroit! et très maladroit, Monsieur," says Stenio, curling his moustache. "C'est bien le mot, Monsieur."

"Also, I make my excuses to Madame la Duchesse, which I hope she will receive," said Lord Kew. The Duchesse shrugged her shoulders and sunk her head.

"When one does not know how to dance, one ought not to dance," continued the Duchesse's knight.

"Monsieur is very good to give me lessons in dancing," said Lord Kew.

"Any lessons which you please, Milor!" cries Stenio; "and everywhere where you will them."

Lord Kew looked at the little man with surprise. He could not understand so much anger for so trifling an accident, which happens a dozen times in every crowded ball. He again bowed to the Duchesse, and walked away.

"This is your Englishman—your Kew, whom you vaunt everywhere," said Stenio to M. de Florac, who was standing by and witnessed the scene. "Is he simply bête, or is he poltron as well? I believe him to be both."

"Silence, Victor!" cried Florac, seizing his arm, and drawing him away. "You know me, and that I am neither one nor the other. Believe my word, that my Lord Kew wants neither courage nor wit!"

"Will you be my witness, Florac?" continues the other.

"To take him your excuses? yes. It is you who have insulted——"

"Yes, parbleu, I have insulted!" says the Gascon.

"A man who never willingly offended soul alive. A man full of heart: the most frank: the most loyal. I have seen him put to the proof, and believe me he is all I say."

"Eh! so much the better for me!" cried the Southron. "I shall have the honour of meeting a gallant man; and there will be two on the field."

"They are making a tool of you, my poor Gascon," said M. de Florac, who saw Madame d'Ivry's eyes watching the couple. She presently took the arm of the noble Count de Punter, and went for fresh air into the adjoining apartment, where play was going on as usual; and Lord Kew and his friend Lord Rooster were pacing the room apart from the gamblers.

My Lord Rooster, at something which Kew said, looked puzzled, and said, "Pooh, stuff, damned little Frenchman! Confounded nonsense!"

"I was searching you, Milor!" said Madame d'Ivry, in a most winning tone, tripping behind him with her noiseless little feet. "Allow me a little word. Your arm! You used to give it me once, mon filleul! I hope you think nothing of the rudeness of M. de Castillonnes; he is a foolish Gascon; he must have been too often to the buffet this evening."

Lord Kew said, No, indeed, he thought nothing of M. de Castillonnes' rudeness.

"I am so glad! These heroes of the salle-d'armes have not the commonest manners. These Gascons are always flamberge au vent. What would the charming Miss Ethel say, if she heard of the dispute?"

"Indeed there is no reason why she should hear of it," said Lord Kew, "unless some obliging friend should communicate it to her."

"Communicate it to her—the poor dear! who would be so cruel as to give her pain?" asked the innocent Duchesse. "Why do you look at me so, Frank?"

"Because I admire you," said her interlocutor, with a bow. "I have never seen Madame la Duchesse to such advantage as to-day."

"You speak in enigmas! Come back with me to the ball-room. Come and dance with me once more. You used to dance with me. Let us have one waltz more, Kew. And then, and then, in a day or two I shall go back to Monsieur le Duc, and tell him that his filleul is going to marry the fairest of all Englishwomen; and to turn hermit in the country, and orator in the chamber of Peers. You have wit! ah si—you have wit!" And she led back Lord Kew, rather amazed himself at what he was doing, into the ball-room; so that the good-natured people who were there, and who beheld them dancing, could not refrain from clapping their hands at the sight of this couple.

The Duchess danced as if she was bitten by that Neapolitan spider which, according to the legend, is such a wonderful dance-incentor. She would have the music quicker and quicker. She sank on Kew's arm, and clung on his support. She poured out all the light of

her languishing eyes into his face. Their glances rather confused than charmed him. But the bystanders were pleased; they thought it so good-hearted of the Duchess, after the little quarrel, to make a public avowal of reconciliation!

Lord Rooster looking on, at the entrance of the dancing-room, over Monsieur de Florac's shoulder, said, "It 's all right! She 's a clipper to dance, the little Duchess."

"The viper," said Florac, "how she writhes!"

"I suppose that business with the Frenchman is all over," says Lord Rooster. "Confounded piece of nonsense!"

"You believe it finished? We shall see!" said Florac, who perhaps knew his fair cousin better. When the waltz was over, Kew led his partner to a seat, and bowed to her; but though she made room for him at her side, pointing to it, and gathering up her rustling robes so that he might sit down, he moved away, his face full of gloom. He never wished to be near her again. There was something more odious to him in her friendship than her hatred. He knew hers was the hand that had dealt that stab at him and Ethel in the morning. He went back and talked with his two friends in the doorway. "Couch yourself, my little Kiou," said Florac. "You are all pale. You were best in bed, mon garçon!"

"She has made me promise to take her in to supper," Kew said with a sigh.

"She will poison you," said the other. "Why have they abolished the roue chez nous? My word of honour, they should re-establish it for this woman."

"There is one in the next room," said Kew with a laugh. "Come, Vicomte, let us try our fortune," and he walked back into the play-room.

That was the last night on which Lord Kew ever played a gambling game. He won constantly. The double zero seemed to obey him; so that the croupiers wondered at his fortune. Florac backed it: saying with the superstition of a gambler, "I am sure something goes to arrive to this boy." From time to time

M. de Florac went back to the dancing-room, leaving his *mise* under Kew's charge. He always found his heaps increased; indeed the worthy Vicomte wanted a turn of luck in his favour. On one occasion he returned with a grave face, saying to Lord Rooster, "She has the other one in hand. We are going to see." "Trente-six encore! et rouge gagne," cried the croupier with his nasal tone. Monsieur de Florac's pockets overflowed with double napoleons, and he stopped his play, luckily, for Kew, putting down his winnings, once, twice, thrice, lost them all.

When Lord Kew had left the dancing-room, Madame d'Ivry saw Stenio following him with fierce looks, and called back that bearded bard. "You were going to pursue M. de Kew," she said: "I knew you were. Sit down here, sir," and she patted him down on her seat with her fan.

"Do you wish that I should call him back, Madame?" said the poet, with the deepest tragic accent.

"I can bring him when I want him, Victor," said the lady.

"Let us hope others will be equally fortunate," the Gascon said, with one hand in his breast, the other stroking his mustachio.

"Fi, Monsieur, que vous sentez le tabac! je vous le défends, entendez-vous, Monsieur!"

"Pourtant, I have seen the day when Madame la Duchesse did not disdain a cigar," said Victor. "If the odour incommodes, permit that I retire."

"And you also would quit me, Stenio? Do you think I did not mark your eyes towards Miss Newcome? your anger when she refused you to dance? Ah! we see all. A woman does not deceive herself, do you see? You send me beautiful verses, Poet. You can write as well of a statue or a picture, of a rose or a sunset, as of the heart of a woman. You were angry just now because I danced with M. de Kew. Do you think in a woman's eyes jealousy is unpardonable?"

"You know how to provoke it, Madame," continued the tragedian.

"Monsieur," replied the lady with dignity, "am I to render you an account of all my actions, and ask your permission for a walk?"

"In fact, I am but the slave, Madame," groaned the Gascon, "I am not the master."

"You are a very rebellious slave, Monsieur," continues the lady, with a pretty *moue*, and a glance of the large eyes artfully brightened by her rouge. "Suppose —suppose I danced with M. de Kew, not for his sake—heaven knows to dance with him is not a pleasure—but for yours. Suppose I do not want a foolish quarrel to proceed. Suppose I know that he is ni sot ni poltron as you pretend. I overheard you, sir, talking with one of the basest of men, my good cousin, M. de Florac: but it is not of him I speak. Suppose I know the Comte de Kew to be a man, cold and insolent, ill-bred, and grossier, as the men of his nation are—but one who lacks no courage —one who is terrible when roused; might I have no occasion to fear, not for him, but—"

"But for me! Ah Marie! Ah Madame! Believe you that a man of my blood will yield a foot to any Englishman? Do you know the story of my race? do you know that since my childhood I have vowed hatred to that nation? Tenez, Madame, this M. Jones who frequents your salon, it was but respect for you that has enabled me to keep my patience with this stupid islander. This Captain Blackball, whom you distinguish, who certainly shoots well, who mounts well to horse, I have always thought his manners were those of the marker of a billiard. But I respect him because he has made war with Don Carlos against the English. But this young M. de Kew, his laugh crisps me the nerves; his insolent air makes me bound; in beholding him I said to myself, I hate you; think whether I love him better after having seen him as I did but now, Madame?" Also, but this Victor did not say, he thought Kew had laughed at him at the beginning of the evening, when the blanche Miss had refused to dance with him.

"Ah, Victor, it is not him, but you that I would save," said the Duchess. And the people round about,

and the Duchess herself afterwards said, yes, certainly, she had a good heart. She entreated Lord Kew; she implored M. Victor; she did everything in her power to appease the quarrel between him and the Frenchman.

After the ball came the supper, which was laid at separate little tables, where parties of half-a-dozen enjoyed themselves. Lord Kew was of the Duchess's party, where our Gascon friend had not a seat. But being one of the managers of the entertainment, his lordship went about from table to table, seeing that the guests at each lacked nothing. He supposed, too, that the dispute with the Gascon had possibly come to an end; at any rate, disagreeable as the other's speech had been, he had resolved to put up with it, not having the least inclination to drink the Frenchman's blood, or to part with his own on so absurd a quarrel. He asked people, in his own good-natured way, to drink wine with him; and catching M. Victor's eye scowling at him from a distant table, he sent a waiter with a champagne bottle to his late opponent, and lifted his glass as a friendly challenge. The waiter carried the message to M. Victor, who, when he heard it, turned up his glass, and folded his arms in a stately manner. "M. de Castillonnes dit qu'il refuse, Milor," said the waiter, rather scared. "He charged me to bring that message to Milor." Florac ran across to the angry Gascon. It was not while at Madame d'Ivry's table that Lord Kew sent his challenge and received his reply; his duties as steward had carried him away from that pretty early.

Meanwhile the glimmering dawn peered into the windows of the refreshment-room, and behold, the sun broke in and scared all the revellers. The ladies scurried away like so many ghosts at cock-crow, some of them not caring to face that detective luminary. Cigars had been lighted ere this; the men remained smoking them with those sleepless German waiters still bringing fresh supplies of drink. Lord Kew gave the Duchesse d'Ivry his arm, and was leading her out; M. de Castillonnes stood scowling directly in their way, upon which, with rather an abrupt turn of the shoulder, and a "Pardon,

Monsieur," Lord Kew pushed by, and conducted the Duchess to her carriage. She did not in the least see what had happened between the two gentlemen in the passage; she ogled, and nodded, and kissed her hands quite affectionately to Kew as the fly drove away.

Florac, in the meanwhile, had seized his compatriot, who had drunk champagne copiously with others, if not with Kew, and was in vain endeavouring to make him hear reason. The Gascon was furious; he vowed that Lord Kew had struck him. "By the tomb of my mother," he bellowed, "I swear I will have his blood!" Lord Rooster was bawling out—"D—— him, carry him to bed, and shut him up;" which remarks Victor did not understand, or two victims would doubtless have been sacrificed on his mamma's mausoleum.

When Kew came back (as he was only too sure to do), the little Gascon rushed forward with a glove in his hand, and having an audience of smokers round about him, made a furious speech about England, leopards, cowardice, insolent islanders, and Napoleon at St. Helena; and demanded reason for Kew's conduct during the night. As he spoke, he advanced towards Lord Kew, glove in hand, and lifted it as if he was actually going to strike.

"There is no need for further words," said Lord Kew, taking his cigar out of his mouth. "If you don't drop that glove, upon my word I will pitch you out of the window. Ha! . . . Pick the man up, somebody. You'll bear witness, gentlemen, I couldn't help myself. If he wants me in the morning, he knows where to find me."

"I declare that my Lord Kew has acted with great forbearance, and under the most brutal provocation—the most brutal provocation, entendez-vous, M. Cabasse?" cried out M. de Florac, rushing forward to the Gascon, who had now risen; "Monsieur's conduct has been unworthy of a Frenchman and a galant homme."

"D—— it, he has had it on his nob, though," said Lord Viscount Rooster, laconically.

"Ah, Roosterre! ceci n'est pas pour rire," Florac

cried sadly, as they both walked away with Lord Kew; "I wish that first blood was all that was to be shed in this quarrel."

"Gaw! how he did go down!" cried Rooster, convulsed with laughter.

"I am very sorry for it," said Kew, quite seriously; "I couldn't help it. God forgive me." And he hung down his head. He thought of the past, and its levities, and punishment coming after him *pede claudo*. It was with all his heart the contrite young man said "God forgive me." He would take what was to follow as the penalty of what had gone before.

"Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas immolat, mon pauvre Kiou," said his French friend. And Lord Rooster, whose classical education had been much neglected, turned round and said, "Hullo, mate, what ship's that?"

Viscount Rooster had not been two hours in bed, when the Count de Punter (formerly of the Black Jägers,) waited upon him upon the part of M. de Castillonnes and the Earl of Kew, who had referred him to the Viscount to arrange matters for a meeting between them. As the meeting must take place out of the Baden territory, and they ought to move before the police prevented them, the Count proposed that they should at once make for France; where, as it was an affair of honour, they would assuredly be let to enter without passports.

Lady Ann and Lady Kew heard that the gentlemen after the ball had all gone out on a hunting party, and were not alarmed for four-and-twenty hours at least. On the next day none of them returned; and on the day after, the family heard that Lord Kew had met with rather a dangerous accident; but all the town knew he had been shot by M. de Castillonnes on one of the islands on the Rhine, opposite Kehl, where he was now lying.

FRED BAYHAM AND CHARLES HONEYMAN

(From Chapter XLIV)

[This short episode again is only introduced because leaving all the incidental humour out of Thackeray is really leaving all Thackeray out of Thackeray. Both Fred Bayham and Charles Honeyman, belong not so much to the plot as to the under plot. Honeyman, the self-indulgent popular preacher, has little to do with the story except to show the patience and chivalry of the Colonel. Bayham has nothing to do with the story; he exists for his own sake, almost like a character in Dickens. But Thackeray wrote with such evident zest about such Bohemian societies, that to leave out a specimen of the thing at its best would be to underrate him altogether.]

Mr. Frederick Bayham waited at Fitzroy Square while Clive was yet talking with his friends there, and favoured that gentleman with his company home to the usual smoky refreshment. Clive always rejoiced in F. B.'s society, whether he was in a sportive mood, or, as now, in a solemn and didactic vein. F. B. had been more than ordinarily majestic all the evening. "I daresay you find me a good deal altered, Clive," he remarked: "I *am* a good deal altered. Since that good Samaritan, your kind father, had compassion on a poor fellow fallen among thieves (though I don't say, mind you, he was much better than his company), F. B. has mended some of his ways. I am trying a course of industry, sir. Powers, perhaps naturally great, have been neglected over the wine-cup and the die. I am beginning to feel my way; and my chiefs yonder, who have just walked home with their cigars in their mouths, and without as much as saying, 'F. B., my boy, shall we go to the "Haunt" and have a cool lobster and a glass of table-beer?'—which they certainly do not consider themselves to be,—I say, sir, the Politician and the Literary Critic" (there was a most sarcastic emphasis laid on these phrases, characterizing Messrs. Warrington and Pendennis) "may find that there is a humble contributor to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, whose name, may be, the amateur

shall one day reckon even higher than their own. Mr. Warrington I do not say so much about—he is an able man, sir, an able man; but there is that about your exceedingly self-satisfied friend, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, which—well, well—let time show. You did not—get the—hem—paper at Rome and Naples, I suppose?"

"Forbidden by the Inquisition," says Clive, delighted; "and at Naples the king furious against it."

"I *don't wonder* they don't like it at Rome, sir. There's serious matter in it which may set the prelates of a certain church rather in a tremor. You haven't read—the—ahem—the Pulpit Pencillings in the *P. M. G.*? Slight sketches, mental and corporeal, of our chief divines now in London—and signed Laud Latimer?"

"I don't do much in that way," said Clive.

"So much the worse for you, my young friend. Not that I mean to judge any other fellow harshly—I mean any other fellow *sinner* harshly—or that I mean that those Pulpit Pencillings would be likely to do you any great good. But, such as they are, they have been productive of benefit. Thank you, Mary, my dear, the tap is uncommonly good, and I drink to your future husband's good health.—A glass of good sound beer refreshes after all that claret. Well, sir, to return to the Pencillings, pardon my vanity in saying, that though Mr. Pendennis laughs at them, they have been of essential service to the paper. They give it a character, they rally round it the respectable classes. They create correspondence. I have received many interesting letters, chiefly from females, about the Pencillings. Some complain that their favourite preachers are slighted; others applaud because the clergymen they sit under are supported by F. B. *I* am Laud Latimer, sir,—though I have heard the letters attributed to the Rev. Mr. Bunker, and to a Member of Parliament eminent in the religious world."

"So you are the famous Laud Latimer?" cries Clive, who had, in fact, seen letters signed by those right reverend names in our paper.

"Famous is hardly the word. One who scoffs at

everything—I need not say I allude to Mr. Arthur Pendennis—would have had the letters signed—the Beadle of the Parish. He calls me the Venerable Beadle sometimes—it being, I grieve to say, his way to deride grave subjects. You wouldn't suppose now, my young Clive, that the same hand which pens the Art criticisms, occasionally, when his Highness Pendennis is lazy, takes a minor Theatre, or turns the sportive epigram, or the ephemeral paragraph, should adopt a grave theme on a Sunday, and chronicle the sermons of British Divines? For eighteen consecutive Sunday evenings, Clive, in Mrs. Ridley's front parlour, which I now occupy, *vice* Miss Cann promoted, I have written the Pencillings—scarcely allowing a drop of refreshment, except under extreme exhaustion, to pass my lips. Pendennis laughs at the Pencillings. He wants to stop them; and says they bore the public—I don't want to *think* a man is jealous, who was himself the cause of my engagement at the *P. M. G.*,—perhaps my powers were not developed then."

"Pen thinks he writes better now than when he began," remarked Clive; "I have heard him say so."

"His opinion of his own writings *is* high, whatever their date. Mine, sir, are only just coming into notice. They begin to know F. B., sir, in the sacred edifices of his metropolitan city. I saw the Bishop of London looking at me last Sunday week, and am sure his Chaplain whispered him, 'It's Mr. Bayham, my lord, nephew of your lordship's right reverend brother, the Lord Bishop of Bullock-smithy.' And last Sunday being at church—at Saint Mungo the Martyr's, Rev. S. Sawders—by Wednesday I got in a female hand—Mrs. Sawders's, no doubt—the biography of the Incumbent of St. Mungo; an account of his early virtues; a copy of his poems; and a hint that he was the gentleman destined for the vacant Deanery.

"Ridley is not the only man I have helped in this world," F. B. continued. "Perhaps I should blush to own it—I *do* blush: but I feel the ties of early acquaintance, and I own that I have puffed your uncle, Charles

Honeyman, most tremendously. It was partly for the sake of the Ridleys and the tick he owes 'em: partly for old times' sake. Sir, are you aware that things are greatly changed with Charles Honeyman, and that the poor F. B. has very likely made his fortune?"

"I am delighted to hear it," cried Clive; "and how, F. B., have you wrought this miracle?"

"By common sense and enterprise, lad—by a knowledge of the world and a benevolent disposition. You'll see Lady Whittlesea's chapel bears a very different aspect now. That miscreant Sherrick owns that he owes me a turn, and has sent me a few dozen of wine—without any stamped paper on my part in return—as an acknowledgment of my service. It chanced, sir, soon after your departure for Italy, that going to his private residence respecting a little bill to which a heedless friend had put his hand, Sherrick invited me to partake of tea in the bosom of his family. I was thirsty—having walked in from 'Jack Straw's Castle,' at Hampstead, where poor Kitely and I had been taking a chop—and accepted the proffered entertainment. The ladies of the family gave us music after the domestic muffin—and then, sir, a great idea occurred to me. You know how magnificently Miss Sherrick and the mother sing? They sang Mozart, sir. 'Why,' I asked of Sherrick, 'should those ladies who sing Mozart to a piano, not sing Handel to an organ?'

"'Dash it, you don't mean a hurdy-gurdy?'

"'Sherrick,' says I, 'you are no better than a Heathen ignoramus. I mean, why shouldn't they sing Handel's Church Music, and Church Music in general, in Lady Whittlesea's Chapel? Behind the screen up in the organ-loft, what's to prevent 'em, by Jingo? Your singing-boys have gone to the "Cave of Harmony;" you and your choir have split—why should not these ladies lead it?' He caught at the idea. You never heard the chants more finely given—and they would be better still if the congregation would but hold their confounded tongues. It was an excellent though a harmless dodge, sir: and drew immensely, to speak profanely. They dress the

part, sir, to admiration—a sort of nun-like costume they come in: Mrs. Sherrick has the soul of an artist still—by Jove, sir, when they have once smelt the lamps, the love of the trade never leaves 'em. The ladies actually practised by moonlight in the Chapel, and came over to Honeyman's to an oyster afterwards. The thing took, sir. People began to take box—seats, I mean, again—and Charles Honeyman, easy in his mind through your noble father's generosity, perhaps inspirited by returning good fortune, has been preaching more eloquently than ever. He took some lessons of Husler, of the Haymarket, sir. His sermons are old, I believe; but so to speak, he has got them up with new scenery, dresses, and effects, sir. They have flowers, sir, about the buildin'—pious ladies are supposed to provide 'em, but, *entre nous*, Sherrick contracts for them with Nathan, or some one in Covent Garden. And—don't tell this now, upon your honour!"

"Tell what, F. B.?" says Clive.

"I got up a persecution against your uncle for Popish practices: summoned a meetin' at the 'Running Footman,' in Bolingbroke Street. Billings, the butterman; Sharwood, the turner and blacking-maker; and the Honourable Phelim O'Curragh, Lord Scullabogue's son, made speeches. Two or three respectable families (your aunt, Mrs. What-d'you-call-'em Newcome amongst the number) quitted the Chapel in disgust—I wrote an article of controversial biography in the *P. M. G.*; set the business going in the daily press; and the thing was done, sir. That property is a paying one to the Incumbent, and to Sherrick over him. Charles's affairs are getting all right, sir. He never had the pluck to owe much, and if it be a sin to have wiped his slate clean, satisfied his creditors, and made Charles easy—upon my conscience, I must confess that F. B. has done it. I hope I may never do anything worse in this life, Clive. It ain't bad to see him doing the martyr, sir: Sebastian riddled with paper pellets; Bartholomew on a cold gridiron. Here comes the lobster. Upon my word, Mary, a finer fish I've seldom seen."

THE DEATH OF THE COLONEL

(Chapter LXXX)

[It says something for the unity of *The Newcomes* as compared with Thackeray's other books, that it is pre-eminently the novel in which it is impossible to leave out either the first chapter or the last. Especially it would be absurd to omit that great scene which so many know without ever knowing the novel; the scene which has almost given a nobler meaning to the phrase "second childhood." Thackeray called his book *The Newcomes*; but there is only one Newcome. On him our eyes are fixed when he first walks into the Cave of Harmony, and our eyes are fixed on him until he dies. He dies in great poverty, a pensioner of Grey Friars. He has known an accidental and perilous prosperity as the head of a financial operation that he does not understand. It collapses, destroying not merely his wealth but his personal dignity and domestic happiness. He is tormented almost to his last hour by the evil Mrs. Mackenzie, who has a financial grievance against him. He has nothing left but his goodness, and with that he confronts God.]

The vow which Clive had uttered, never to share bread with his mother-in-law, or sleep under the same roof with her, was broken on the very next day. A stronger will than the young man's intervened, and he had to confess the impotence of his wrath before that superior power. In the forenoon of the day following that unlucky dinner, I went with my friend to the banking-house whither Mr. Luce's letter directed us, and carried away with me the principal sum, in which the Campaigner said Colonel Newcome was indebted to her, with the interest accurately computed and reimbursed. Clive went off with a pocketful of money to the dear old Poor Brother of Grey Friars; and he promised to return with his father, and dine with my wife in Queen Square. I had received a letter from Laura by the morning's post, announcing her return by the express train from Newcome, and desiring that a spare bed-room should be got ready for a friend who accompanied her.

On reaching Howland Street, Clive's door was opened, rather to my surprise, by the rebellious maid-servant

who had received her dismissal on the previous night; and the Doctor's carriage drove up as she was still speaking to me. The polite practitioner sped upstairs to Mrs. Newcome's apartment. Mrs. Mackenzie, in a *robe-de-chambre* and cap very different from yesterday's, came out eagerly to meet the physician on the landing. Ere they had been a quarter of an hour together, arrived a cab, which discharged an elderly person with her band-box and bundles; I had no difficulty in recognizing a professional nurse in the new-comer. She too disappeared into the sick-room, and left me sitting in the neighbouring chamber, the scene of the last night's quarrel.

Hither presently came to me Maria, the maid. She said she had not the heart to go away now she was wanted; that they had passed a sad night, and that no one had been to bed. Master Tommy was below, and the landlady taking care of him: the landlord had gone out for the nurse. Mrs. Clive had been taken bad after Mr. Clive went away the night before. Mrs. Mackenzie had gone to the poor young thing, and there she went on, crying, and screaming, and stamping, as she used to do in her tantrums, which was most cruel of her, and made Mrs. Clive so ill. And presently the young lady began: my informant told me. She came screaming into the sitting-room, her hair over her shoulders, calling out she was deserted, deserted, and would like to die. She was like a mad woman for some time. She had fit after fit of hysterics: and there was her mother, kneeling, and crying, and calling out to her darling child to calm herself;—which it was all her own doing, and she had much better have held her own tongue, remarked the resolute Maria. I understood only too well from the girl's account what had happened, and that Clive, if resolved to part with his mother-in-law, should not have left her, even for twelve hours, in possession of his house. The wretched woman, whose Self was always predominant, and who, though she loved her daughter after her own fashion, never forgot her own vanity or passion, had improved the occasion of Clive's

absence: worked upon her child's weakness, jealousy, ill-health, and driven her, no doubt, into the fever which yonder physician was called to quell.

The Doctor presently enters to write a prescription, followed by Clive's mother-in-law, who had cast Rosey's fine Cashmere shawl over her shoulders, to hide her disarray. "You here still, Mr. Pendennis!" she exclaims. She knew I was there. Had not she changed her dress in order to receive me?

"I have to speak to you for two minutes on important business, and then I shall go," I replied gravely.

"Oh, sir! to what a scene you have come! To what a state has Clive's conduct last night driven my darling child!"

As the odious woman spoke so, the Doctor's keen eyes, looking up from the prescription, caught mine. "I declare before heaven, madam," I said hotly, "I believe you yourself are the cause of your daughter's present illness, as you have been of the misery of my friends."

"Is this, sir," she was breaking out, "is this language to be used to——?"

"Madam, will you be silent?" I said. "I am come to bid you farewell on the part of those whom your temper has driven into infernal torture. I am come to pay you every halfpenny of the sum which my friends do not owe you, but which they restore. Here is the account, and here is the money to settle it. And I take this gentleman to witness, to whom, no doubt, you have imparted what you call your wrongs" (the Doctor smiled, and shrugged his shoulders), "that now you are paid."

"A widow—a poor, lonely, insulted widow!" cries the Campaigner, with trembling hands, taking possession of the notes.

"And I wish to know," I continued, "when my friend's house will be free to him, and he can return in peace?"

Here Rosey's voice was heard from the inner apartment, screaming, "Mamma, mamma!"

"I go to my child, sir," she said. "If Captain Mackenzie had been alive, you would not have *dared* to insult me so." And carrying off her money, she left us.

"Cannot she be got out of the house?" I said to the Doctor. "My friend will never return until she leaves it. It is my belief she is the cause of her daughter's present illness."

"Not altogether, my dear sir. Mrs. Newcome was in a very, very delicate state of health. Her mother is a lady of impetuous temper, who expresses herself very strongly—too strongly, I own. In consequence of unpleasant family discussions, which no physician can prevent, Mrs. Newcome has been wrought up to a state of—of agitation. Her fever is, in fact, at present, very high. You know her condition. I am apprehensive of ulterior consequences. I have recommended an excellent and experienced nurse to her. Mr. Smith, the medical man at the corner, is a most able practitioner. I shall myself call again in a few hours, and I trust that, after the event which I apprehend, everything will go well."

"Cannot Mrs. Mackenzie leave the house, sir?" I asked.

"Her daughter cries out for her at every moment. Mrs. Mackenzie is certainly not a judicious nurse, but in Mrs. Newcome's present state I cannot take upon myself to separate them. Mr. Newcome may return, and I do think and believe that his presence may tend to impose silence and restore tranquillity."

I had to go back to Clive with these gloomy tidings. The poor fellow must put up a bed in his studio, and there await the issue of his wife's illness. I saw Thomas Newcome could not sleep under his son's roof that night. That dear meeting, which both so desired, was delayed, who could say for how long?

"The Colonel may come to us," I thought; "our old house is big enough." I guessed who was the friend coming in my wife's company; and pleased myself by thinking that two friends so dear should meet in our

home. Bent upon these plans, I repaired to Grey Friars, and to Thomas Newcome's chamber there.

Bayham opened the door when I knocked, and came towards me with a finger on his lip, and a sad, sad countenance. He closed the door gently behind him, and led me into the court. "Clive is with him, and Miss Newcome. He is very ill. He does not know them," said Bayham with a sob. "He calls out for both of them: they are sitting there, and he does not know them."

In a brief narrative, broken by more honest tears, Fred Bayham, as we paced up and down the court, told me what had happened. The old man must have passed a sleepless night, for on going to his chamber in the morning, his attendant found him dressed in his chair, and his bed undisturbed. He must have sat all through the bitter night without a fire; but his hands were burning hot, and he rambled in his talk. He spoke of some one coming to drink tea with him, pointed to the fire, and asked why it was not made; he would not go to bed, though the nurse pressed him. The bell began to ring for morning chapel; he got up and went towards his gown, groping towards it as though he could hardly see, and put it over his shoulders, and would go out, but he would have fallen in the court if the good nurse had not given him her arm; and the physician of the Hospital, passing fortunately at this moment, who had always been a great friend of Colonel Newcome's, insisted upon leading him back to his room again, and got him to bed. "When the bell stopped, he wanted to rise once more; he fancied he was a boy at school again," said the nurse, "and that he was going in to Dr. Raine, who was schoolmaster here ever so many years ago." So it was, that when happier days seemed to be dawning for the good man, that reprieve came too late. Grief, and years, and humiliation, and care, and cruelty had been too strong for him, and Thomas Newcome was stricken down.

Bayham's story told, I entered the room, over which the twilight was falling, and saw the figures of Clive

and Ethel seated at each end of the bed. The poor old man within it was calling in incoherent sentences. I had to call Clive from the present grief before him, with intelligence of further sickness awaiting him at home. Our poor patient did not heed what I said to his son. "You must go home to Rosey," Ethel said. "She will be sure to ask for her husband, and forgiveness is best, dear Clive. I will stay with uncle. I will never leave him. Please God, he will be better in the morning when you come back." So Clive's duty called him to his own sad home; and, the bearer of dismal tidings, I returned to mine. The fires were lit there, and the table spread; and kind hearts were waiting to welcome the friend who never more was to enter my door.

It may be imagined that the intelligence which I brought alarmed and afflicted my wife, and Madame de Florac, our guest. Laura immediately went away to Rosey's house to offer her services if needed. The accounts which she brought hence were very bad: Clive came to her for a minute or two, but Mrs. Mackenzie could not see her. Should she not bring the little boy home to her children? Laura asked; and Clive thankfully accepted that offer. The little man slept in our nursery that night, and was at play with our young ones on the morrow—happy and unconscious of the fate impending over his home.

Yet two more days passed, and I had to take two advertisements to *The Times* newspaper on the part of poor Clive. Among the announcements of Births was printed, "On the 28th, in Howland Street, Mrs. Clive Newcome of a son still-born." And a little lower, in the third division of the same column, appeared the words, "On the 29th, in Howland Street, aged 26, Rosalind, wife of Clive Newcome, Esq." So, one day, shall the names of all of us be written there; to be deplored by how many?—to be remembered how long?—to occasion what tears, praises, sympathy, censure?—yet for a day or two, while the busy world has time to recollect us who have passed beyond it. So this poor little flower

had bloomed for its little day, and pined, and withered, and perished. There was only one friend by Clive's side following the humble procession which laid poor Rosey and her child out of sight of a world that had been but unkind to her. Not many tears were there to water her lonely little grave. A grief that was akin to shame and remorse humbled him as he knelt over her. Poor little harmless lady! no more childish triumphs and vanities, no more hidden griefs are you to enjoy or suffer; and earth closes over your simple pleasures and tears! The snow was falling and whitening the coffin as they lowered it into the ground. It was at the same cemetery in which Lady Kew was buried. I daresay the same clergyman read the same service over the two graves, as he will read it for you or any of us to-morrow, and until his own turn comes. Come away from the place, poor Clive! Come sit with your orphan little boy, and bear him on your knee, and hug him to your heart. He seems yours now, and all a father's love may pour out upon him. Until this hour, Fate uncontrollable and home tyranny had separated him from you.

It was touching to see the eagerness and tenderness with which the great strong man now assumed the guardianship of the child, and endowed him with his entire wealth of affection. The little boy now ran to Clive whenever he came in, and sat for hours prattling to him. He would take the boy out to walk, and from our windows we could see Clive's black figure striding over the snow in St. James's Park, the little man trotting beside him, or perched on his father's shoulder. My wife and I looked at them one morning as they were making their way towards the City. "He has inherited that loving heart from his father," Laura said; "and he is paying over the whole property to his son."

Clive, and the boy sometimes with him, used to go daily to Grey Friars, where the Colonel still lay ill. After some days the fever which had attacked him left him; but left him so weak and enfeebled that he could only go from his bed to the chair by his fire-side. The

season was extremely bitter, the chamber which he inhabited was warm and spacious; it was considered unadvisable to move him until he had attained greater strength, and till warmer weather. The medical men of the House hoped he might rally in spring. My friend, Dr. Goodenough, came to him; he hoped too: but not with a hopeful face. A chamber, luckily vacant, hard by the Colonel's, was assigned to his friends, where we sat when we were too many for him. Besides his customary attendant, he had two dear and watchful nurses, who were almost always with him—Ethel and Madame de Florac, who had passed many a faithful year by an old man's bedside; who would have come, as to a work of religion, to any sick couch, much more to this one, where he lay for whose life she would once gladly have given her own.

But our Colonel, we all were obliged to acknowledge, was no more our friend of old days. He knew us again, and was good to every one round him, as his wont was; especially when Boy came, his old eyes lighted up with simple happiness, and, with eager trembling hands, he would seek under his bed-clothes, or the pockets of his dressing-gown, for toys or cakes, which he had caused to be purchased for his grandson. There was a little laughing, red-cheeked, white-headed gown-boy of the school, to whom the old man had taken a great fancy. One of the symptoms of his returning consciousness and recovery, as we hoped, was his calling for this child, who pleased our friend by his archness and merry ways; and who, to the old gentleman's unfailing delight, used to call him, "Codd Colonel." "Tell little F——, that Codd Colonel wants to see him;" and the little gown-boy was brought to him; and the Colonel would listen to him for hours; and hear all about his lessons and his play; and prattle, almost as childishly, about Dr. Raine, and his own early school-days. The boys of the school, it must be said, had heard the noble old gentleman's touching history, and had all got to know and love him. They came every day to hear news of him; sent him in books and papers to amuse him; and

some benevolent young souls—God's blessing on all honest boys, say I—painted theatrical characters, and sent them in to Codd Colonel's grandson. The little fellow was made free of gown-boys, and once came thence to his grandfather in a little gown, which delighted the old man hugely. Boy said he would like to be a little gown-boy; and I make no doubt, when he is old enough, his father will get him that post, and put him under the tuition of my friend Dr. Senior.

So, weeks passed away, during which our dear old friend still remained with us. His mind was gone at intervals, but would rally feebly; and with his consciousness returned his love, his simplicity, his sweetness. He would talk French with Madame de Florac, at which time his memory appeared to awaken with surprising vividness, his cheek flushed, and he was a youth again, —a youth all love and hope,—a stricken old man, with a beard as white as snow covering the noble careworn face. At such times he called her by her Christian name of Léonore; he addressed courtly old words of regard and kindness to the aged lady; anon he wandered in his talk, and spoke to her as if they still were young. Now, as in those early days, his heart was pure; no anger remained in it; no guile tainted it; only peace and goodwill dwelt in it.

Rosey's death had seemed to shock him for a while when the unconscious little boy spoke of it. Before that circumstance, Clive had even forborne to wear mourning, lest the news should agitate his father. The Colonel remained silent and was very much disturbed all that day, but he never appeared to comprehend the fact quite; and, once or twice afterwards, asked, Why she did not come to see him? She was prevented, he supposed—she was prevented, he said, with a look of terror: he never once otherwise alluded to that unlucky tyrant of his household, who had made his last years so unhappy.

The circumstance of Clive's legacy he never understood: but more than once spoke of Barnes to Ethel, and sent his compliments to him, and said he should

like to shake him by the hand. Barnes Newcome never once offered to touch that honoured hand, though his sister bore her uncle's message to him. They came often from Bryanston Square; Mrs. Hobson even offered to sit with the Colonel, and read to him, and brought him books for his improvement. But her presence disturbed him; he cared not for her books; the two nurses whom he loved faithfully watched him; and my wife and I were admitted to him sometimes, both of whom he honoured with regard and recognition. As for F. B., in order to be near his Colonel, did not that good fellow take up his lodging in Cistercian Lane, at the "Red Cow"? He is one whose errors, let us hope, shall be pardoned, *quia multum amavit*. I am sure he felt ten times more joy at hearing of Clive's legacy, than if thousands had been bequeathed to himself. May good health and good fortune speed him!

The days went on, and our hopes, raised sometimes, began to flicker and fail. One evening the Colonel left his chair for his bed in pretty good spirits, but passed a disturbed night, and the next morning was too weak to rise. Then he remained in his bed, and his friends visited him there. One afternoon he asked for his little gown-boy, and the child was brought to him, and sat by the bed with a very awe-stricken face: and then gathered courage, and tried to amuse him by telling him how it was a half-holiday, and they were having a cricket-match with the St. Peter's boys in the green, and Grey Friars was in and winning. The Colonel quite understood about it; he would like to see the game; he had played many a game on that green when he was a boy. He grew excited; Clive dismissed his father's little friend, and put a sovereign into his hand; and away he ran to say that Codd Colonel had come into a fortune, and to buy tarts, and to see the match out. *I, curre*, little white-haired gown-boy! Heaven speed you, little friend!

After the child had gone, Thomas Newcome began to wander more and more. He talked louder; he gave the word of command, spoke Hindustanee as if to his men.

Then he spoke words in French rapidly, seizing a hand that was near him, and crying, "Toujours, toujours"! But it was Ethel's hand which he took. Ethel and Clive and the nurse were in the room with him; the nurse came to us, who were sitting in the adjoining apartment; Madame de Florac was there, with my wife and Bayham.

At the look in the woman's countenance Madame de Florac started up. "He is very bad, he wanders a great deal," the nurse whispered. The French lady fell instantly on her knees, and remained rigid in prayer.

Some time afterwards Ethel came in with a scared face to our pale group. "He is calling for you again, dear lady," she said, going up to Madame de Florac, who was still kneeling; "and just now he said he wanted Pendennis to take care of his boy. He will not know you." She hid her tears as she spoke.

She went into the room where Clive was at the bed's foot; the old man within it talked on rapidly for a while: then again he would sigh and be still: once more I heard him say hurriedly, "Take care of him when I'm in India;" and then with a heartrending voice he called out, "Léonore, Léonore!" She was kneeling by his side now. The patient's voice sank into faint murmurs; only a moan now and then announced that he was not asleep.

At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said "Adsum!" and fell back. It was the word we used at school, when names were called; and lo, he, whose heart was that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of The Master.

ESMOND

[In *Esmond* Thackeray attempted what was, if not his greatest work at least his most difficult. Technically the task was difficult, being that of writing a flowing and sympathetic tale in the old and even artificial diction of Queen Anne. But spiritually the matter was far more delicate. He had to tell so as to make it pure and stately a tale which wanted but one or two false touches to make it grotesque and even indecent. He had to tell the tale of a young man standing in a romantic relation at once to a mother and a daughter, loved by the mother, loving the daughter, and finally marrying the mother. This strange story is managed so that it moves like music. Young Henry Esmond, a studious and somewhat sombre lad, endures the repute of illegitimacy, though he could, if he chose, dispossess his patrons, Lord and Lady Castlewood. Lord Castlewood is a loose but kind man; Lady Castlewood a loyal and lofty-minded woman whose heart is already embittered, though she hardly knows it, by her involuntary love for Harry. It bursts out in tragic reaction when Lord Castlewood is killed in a duel with Lord Mohun; and his lady reviles herself inwardly and Harry openly for the silent wrong done to her dead lord. The following is the story of the duel.]

THE DEATH OF LORD CASTLEWOOD

(From Book I, Chapters XIII, XIV)

As my lord and his friend Lord Mohun were such close companions, Mistress Beatrix chose to be jealous of the latter; and the two gentlemen often entertained each other by laughing, in their rude boisterous way, at the child's freaks of anger and show of dislike. "When thou art old enough, thou shalt marry Lord Mohun," Beatrix's father would say: on which the girl would pout and say, "I would rather marry Tom Tusher." And because the Lord Mohun always showed an extreme gallantry to

my Lady Castlewood, whom he professed to admire devotedly, one day, in answer to this old joke of her father's, Beatrix said, "I think my lord would rather marry mamma than marry me; and is waiting till you die to ask her."

The words were said lightly and pertly by the girl one night before supper, as the family party were assembled near the great fire. The two lords, who were at cards, both gave a start; my lady turned as red as scarlet, and bade Mistress Beatrix go to her own chamber; whereupon the girl, putting on, as her wont was, the most innocent air, said, "I am sure I meant no wrong; I am sure mamma talks a great deal more to Harry Esmond than she does to papa—and she cried when Harry went away, and she never does when papa goes away! and last night she talked to Lord Mohun for ever so long, and sent us out of the room, and cried when we came back, and——"

"D—n!" cried out my Lord Castlewood, out of all patience. "Go out of the room, you little viper!" and he started up and flung down his cards.

"Ask Lord Mohun what I said to him, Francis," her ladyship said, rising up with a scared face, but yet with a great and touching dignity and candour in her look and voice. "Come away with me, Beatrix." Beatrix sprung up too; she was in tears now.

"Dearest mamma, what have I done?" she asked. "Sure I meant no harm." And she clung to her mother, and the pair went out sobbing together.

"I will tell you what your wife said to me, Frank," my Lord Mohun cried. "Parson Harry may hear it; and, as I hope for heaven, every word is true. Last night, with tears in her eyes, your wife implored me to play no more with you at dice or at cards, and you know best whether what she asked was not for your good."

"Of course it was, Mohun," says my lord in a dry hard voice. "Of course you are a model of a man: and the world knows what a saint you are."

My Lord Mohun was separated from his wife, and had

had many affairs of honour: of which women as usual had been the cause.

"I am no saint, though your wife is—and I can answer for my actions as other people must for their words," said my Lord Mohun.

"By G—, my lord, you shall," cried the other, starting up.

"We have another little account to settle first, my lord," says Lord Mohun. Whereupon Harry Esmond, filled with alarm for the consequences to which this disastrous dispute might lead, broke out into the most vehement expostulations with his patron and his adversary. "Gracious heavens!" he said, "my lord, are you going to draw a sword upon your friend in your own house? Can you doubt the honour of a lady who is as pure as heaven, and would die a thousand times rather than do you a wrong? Are the idle words of a jealous child to set friends at variance? Has not my mistress, as much as she dared do, besought your lordship, as the truth must be told, to break your intimacy with my Lord Mohun; and to give up the habit which may bring ruin on your family? But for my Lord Mohun's illness, had he not left you?"

"'Faith, Frank, a man with a gouty toe can't run after other men's wives," broke out my Lord Mohun, who indeed was in that way, and with a laugh and a look at his swathed limb so frank and comical, that the other dashing his fist across his forehead was caught by that infectious good-humour, and said with his oath, "D—— it, Harry, I believe thee," and so this quarrel was over, and the two gentlemen, at swords drawn but just now, dropped their points, and shook hands.

Beati pacifici. "Go, bring my lady back," said Harry's patron. Esmond went away only too glad to be the bearer of such good news. He found her at the door; she had been listening there, but went back as he came. She took both his hands; hers were marble cold. She seemed as if she would fall on his shoulder. "Thank you, and God bless you, my dear brother Harry," she said. She kissed his hand, Esmond felt her tears upon

it: and leading her into the room, and up to my lord, the Lord Castlewood, with an outbreak of feeling and affection such as he had not exhibited for many a long day, took his wife to his heart, and bent over and kissed her and asked her pardon.

"'Tis time for me to go to roost. I will have my gruel a-bed," said my Lord Mohun: and limped off comically on Harry Esmond's arm. "By George, that woman is a pearl!" he said; "and 'tis only a pig that wouldn't value her. Have you seen the vulgar trapesing orange girl whom Esmond"—but here Mr. Esmond interrupted him, saying, that these were not affairs for him to know.

My lord's gentleman came in to wait upon his master, who was no sooner in his nightcap and dressing-gown than he had another visitor whom his host insisted on sending to him: and this was no other than the Lady Castlewood herself with the toast and gruel, which her husband bade her make and carry with her own hands in to her guest.

Lord Castlewood stood looking after his wife as she went on this errand, and as he looked, Harry Esmond could not but gaze on him, and remarked in his patron's face an expression of love, and grief and care, which very much moved and touched the young man. Lord Castlewood's hands fell down at his sides, and his head on his breast, and presently he said:

"You heard what Mohun said, parson?"

"That my lady was a saint?"

"That there are two accounts to settle. I have been going wrong these five years, Harry Esmond. Ever since you brought that damned small-pox into the house, there has been a fate pursuing me, and I had best have died of it, and not run away from it like a coward. I left Beatrix with her relations, and went to London; and I fell among thieves, Harry, and I got back to confounded cards and dice, which I hadn't touched since my marriage—no, not since I was in the Duke's Guard, with those wild Mohocks. And I have been playing worse and worse, and going deeper and deeper into it: and I

owe Mohun two thousand pounds now; and when it's paid I am little better than a beggar. I don't like to look my boy in the face; he hates me, I know he does. And I have spent Beaty's little portion: and the Lord knows what will come if I live; the best thing I can do is to die, and release what portion of the estate is redeemable for the boy."

Mohun was as much master at Castlewood as the owner of the Hall itself; and his equipages filled the stables, where, indeed, there was room in plenty for many more horses than Harry Esmond's impoverished patron could afford to keep. He had arrived on horseback with his people; but when his gout broke out my Lord Mohun sent to London for a light chaise he had, drawn by a pair of small horses, and running as swift, wherever roads were good, as a Laplander's sledge. When this carriage came, his lordship was eager to drive the Lady Castlewood abroad in it, and did so many times, and at a rapid pace, greatly to his companion's enjoyment, who loved the swift motion and the healthy breezes over the Downs which lie hard upon Castlewood, and stretch thence towards the sea. As this amusement was very pleasant to her, and her lord, far from showing any mistrust of her intimacy with Lord Mohun, encouraged her to be his companion—as if willing by his present extreme confidence to make up for any past mistrust which his jealousy had shown—the Lady Castlewood enjoyed herself freely in this harmless diversion, which, it must be owned, her guest was very eager to give her; and it seemed that she grew the more free with Lord Mohun, and pleased with his company, because of some sacrifice which his gallantry was pleased to make in her favour.

Seeing the two gentlemen constantly at cards still of evenings, Harry Esmond one day deplored to his mistress that this fatal infatuation of her lord should continue; and now they seemed reconciled together, begged his lady to hint to her husband that he should play no more.

But Lady Castlewood, smiling archly and gaily, said

she would speak to him presently, and that, for a few nights more at least, he might be let to have his amusement.

"Indeed, madam," said Harry, "you know not what it costs you; and 'tis easy for any observer who knows the game, to see that Lord Mohun is by far the stronger of the two."

"I know he is," says my lady, still with exceeding good-humour; "he is not only the best player, but the kindest player in the world."

"Madam, madam!" Esmond cried, transported and provoked. "Debts of honour must be paid sometime or other; and my master will be ruined if he goes on."

"Harry, shall I tell you a secret?" my lady replied, with kindness and pleasure still in her eyes. "Francis will not be ruined if he goes on: he will be rescued if he goes on. I repent of having spoken and thought unkindly of the Lord Mohun when he was here in the past year. He is full of much kindness and good; and 'tis my belief that we shall bring him to better things. I have lent him Tillotson and your favourite Bishop Taylor, and he is much touched, he says; and as a proof of his repentance—(and herein lies my secret)—what do you think he is doing with Francis? He is letting poor Frank win his money back again. He hath won already at the last four nights; and my Lord Mohun says that he will not be the means of injuring poor Frank and my dear children."

"And in God's name, what do you return him for the sacrifice?" asked Esmond, aghast; who knew enough of men, and of this one in particular, to be aware that such a finished rake gave nothing for nothing. "How, in heaven's name, are you to pay him?"

"Pay him! With a mother's blessing and a wife's prayers!" cries my lady, clasping her hands together. Harry Esmond did not know whether to laugh, to be angry, or to love his dear mistress more than ever for the obstinate innocency with which she chose to regard the conduct of a man of the world, whose designs he knew better how to interpret. He told the lady, guard-

edly, but so as to make his meaning quite clear to her, what he knew in respect of the former life and conduct of this nobleman; of other women against whom he had plotted, and whom he had overcome; of the conversation which he, Harry himself, had had with Lord Mohun, wherein the lord made a boast of his libertinism, and frequently avowed that he held all women to be fair game (as his lordship styled this pretty sport), and that they were all, without exception, to be won. And the return Harry had for his entreaties and remonstrances was a fit of anger on Lady Castlewood's part, who would not listen to his accusations; she said and retorted that he himself must be very wicked and perverted to suppose evil designs where she was sure none were meant. "And this is the good meddlers get of interfering," Harry thought to himself with much bitterness; and his perplexity and annoyance were only the greater because he could not speak to my Lord Castlewood himself upon a subject of this nature, or venture to advise or warn him regarding a matter so very sacred as his own honour, of which my lord was naturally the best guardian.

But though Lady Castlewood would listen to no advice from her young dependant, and appeared indignantly to refuse it when offered, Harry had the satisfaction to find that she adopted the counsel which she professed to reject; for the next day she pleaded a headache, when my Lord Mohun would have had her drive out, and the next day the headache continued; and next day, in a laughing gay way, she proposed that the children should take her place in his lordship's car, for they would be charmed with a ride of all things; and she must not have all the pleasure for herself. My lord gave them a drive with a very good grace, though, I daresay, with rage and disappointment inwardly—not that his heart was very seriously engaged in his designs upon this simple lady: but the life of such men is often one of intrigue, and they can no more go through the day without a woman to pursue, than a fox-hunter without his sport after breakfast.

Under an affected carelessness of demeanour, and though there was no outward demonstration of doubt upon his patron's part since the quarrel between the two lords, Harry yet saw that Lord Castlewood was watching his guest very narrowly; and caught sight of distrust and smothered rage (as Harry thought) which foreboded no good. On the point of honour Esmond knew how touchy his patron was; and watched him almost as a physician watches a patient, and it seemed to him that this one was slow to take the disease, though he could not throw off the poison when once it had mingled with his blood. We read in Shakspeare (whom the writer for his part considers to be far beyond Mr. Congreve, Mr. Dryden, or any of the wits of the present period), that when jealousy is once declared, nor poppy, nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy syrups of the East, will ever soothe it, or medicine it away.

In fine, the symptoms seemed to be so alarming to this young physician (who, indeed, young as he was, had felt the kind pulses of all those dear kinsmen), that Harry thought it would be his duty to warn my Lord Mohun, and let him know that his designs were suspected and watched. So one day, when in rather a pettish humour his lordship had sent to Lady Castlewood, who had promised to drive with him, and now refused to come, Harry said—"My lord, if you will kindly give me a place by your side I will thank you; I have much to say to you, and would like to speak to you alone."

"You honour me by giving me your confidence, Mr. Henry Esmond," says the other, with a very grand bow. My lord was always a fine gentleman, and young as he was there was that in Esmond's manner which showed that he was a gentleman too, and that none might take a liberty with him—so the pair went out and mounted the little carriage, which was in waiting for them in the court, with its two little cream-coloured Hanoverian horses covered with splendid furniture and champing at the bit.

"My lord," says Harry Esmond, after they were got into the country, and pointing to my Lord Mohun's

foot, which was swathed in flannel, and put up rather ostentatiously on a cushion—"my lord, I studied medicine at Cambridge."

"Indeed, Parson Harry," says he; "and are you going to take out a diploma: and cure your fellow-students of the ——"

"Of the gout," says Harry, interrupting him, and looking him hard in the face; "I know a good deal about the gout."

"I hope you may never have it. 'Tis an infernal disease," says my lord, "and its twinges are diabolical. Ah!" and he made a dreadful wry face, as if he just felt a twinge.

"Your lordship would be much better if you took off all that flannel—it only serves to inflame the toe," Harry continued, looking his man full in the face.

"Oh! it only serves to inflame the toe, does it?" says the other, with an innocent air.

"If you took off that flannel, and flung that absurd slipper away, and wore a boot," continues Harry.

"You recommend me boots, Mr. Esmond?" asks my lord.

"Yes, boots and spurs. I saw your lordship three days ago run down the gallery fast enough," Harry goes on. "I am sure that taking gruel at night is not so pleasant as claret to your lordship; and besides it keeps your lordship's head cool for play, whilst my patron's is hot and flustered with drink."

"'Sdeath, sir, you dare not say that I don't play fair?" cries my lord, whipping his horses, which went away at a gallop.

"You are cool when my lord is drunk," Harry continued; "your lordship gets the better of my patron. I have watched you as I looked up from my books."

"You young Argus!" says Lord Mohun, who liked Harry Esmond—and for whose company and wit, and a certain daring manner, Harry had a great liking too—"You young Argus! you may look with all your hundred eyes and see we play fair. I've played away an estate of a night, and I've played my shirt off my back;

and I've played away my periwig and gone home in a nightcap. But no man can say I ever took advantage of him beyond the advantage of the game. I played a dice-cogging scoundrel in Alsatia for his ears and won 'em, and have one of 'em in my lodgings in Bow Street in a bottle of spirits. Harry Mohun will play any man for anything—always would."

"You are playing awful stakes, my lord, in my patron's house," Harry said, "and more games than are on the cards."

"What do you mean, sir?" cries my lord, turning round, with a flush on his face.

"I mean," answers Harry, in a sarcastic tone, "that your gout is well—if ever you had it."

"Sir!" cried my lord, getting hot.

"And to tell the truth I believe your lordship has no more gout than I have. At any rate, change of air will do you good, my Lord Mohun. And I mean fairly that you had better go from Castlewood."

"And were you appointed to give me this message?" cries the Lord Mohun. "Did Frank Esmond commission you?"

"No one did. 'Twas the honour of my family that commissioned me."

"And you are prepared to answer this?" cries the other, furiously lashing his horses.

"Quite, my lord: your lordship will upset the carriage if you whip so hotly."

"By George, you have a brave spirit!" my lord cried out, bursting into a laugh. "I suppose 'tis that infernal *botte de Jésuite* that makes you so bold," he added.

"'Tis the peace of the family I love best in the world," Harry Esmond said warmly—"'tis the honour of a noble benefactor—the happiness of my dear mistress and her children. I owe them everything in life, my lord; and would lay it down for any one of them. What brings you here to disturb this quiet household? What keeps you lingering month after month in the country? What makes you feign illness and invent

pretexts for delay? Is it to win my poor patron's money? Be generous, my lord, and spare his weakness for the sake of his wife and children. Is it to practise upon the simple heart of a virtuous lady? You might as well storm the Tower single-handed. But you may blemish her name by light comments on it, or by lawless pursuits—and I don't deny that 'tis in your power to make her unhappy. Spare these innocent people, and leave them."

"By the Lord, I believe thou hast an eye to the pretty Puritan thyself, Master Harry," says my lord, with his reckless, good-humoured laugh, and as if he had been listening with interest to the passionate appeal of the young man. "Whisper, Harry. Art thou in love with her thyself? Hath tipsy Frank Esmond come by the way of all flesh?"

"My lord, my lord," cried Harry, his face flushing and his eyes filling as he spoke, "I never had a mother, but I love this lady as one. I worship her as a devotee worships a saint. To hear her name spoken lightly seems blasphemy to me. Would you dare think of your own mother so, or suffer any one so to speak of her? It is a horror to me to fancy that any man should think of her impurely. I implore you, I beseech you, to leave her. Danger will come out of it."

"Danger, psha!" says my lord, giving a cut to the horses, which at this minute—for we were got on to the Downs—fairly ran off into a gallop that no pulling could stop. The rein broke in Lord Mohun's hands, and the furious beasts scampered madly forwards, the carriage swaying to and fro, and the persons within it holding on to the sides as best they might, until seeing a great ravine before them, where an upset was inevitable, the two gentlemen leapt for their lives, each out of his side of the chaise. Harry Esmond was quit for a fall on the grass, which was so severe that it stunned him for a minute; but he got up presently very sick, and bleeding at the nose, but with no other hurt. The Lord Mohun was not so fortunate; he fell on his head against a stone, and lay on the ground, dead to all appearance.

This misadventure happened as the gentlemen were on their return homewards; and my Lord Castlewood, with his son and daughter, who were going out for a ride, met the ponies as they were galloping with the car behind, the broken traces entangling their heels, and my lord's people turned and stopped them. It was young Frank who spied out Lord Mohun's scarlet coat as he lay on the ground, and the party made up to that unfortunate gentleman and Esmond, who was now standing over him. His large periwig and feathered hat had fallen off, and he was bleeding profusely from a wound on the forehead, and looking, and being, indeed, a corpse.

"Great God! he's dead!" says my lord. "Ride, some one: fetch a doctor—stay. I'll go home and bring back Tusher; he knows surgery," and my lord, with his son after him, galloped away.

They were scarce gone when Harry Esmond, who was indeed but just come to himself, bethought him of a similar accident which he had seen on a ride from Newmarket to Cambridge, and taking off a sleeve of my lord's coat, Harry, with a penknife, opened a vein in his arm, and was greatly relieved, after a moment, to see the blood flow. He was near half an hour before he came to himself, by which time Dr. Tusher and little Frank arrived, and found my lord not a corpse indeed, but as pale as one.

After a time, when he was able to bear motion, they put my lord upon a groom's horse, and gave the other to Esmond, the men walking on each side of my lord, to support him, if need were, and worthy Dr. Tusher with them. Little Frank and Harry rode together at a foot pace.

When we rode together home, the boy said: "We met mamma, who was walking on the terrace with the Doctor, and papa frightened her, and told her you were dead . . ."

"That I was dead?" asks Harry.

"Yes. Papa says: 'Here's poor Harry killed, my dear;' on which mamma gives a great scream; and oh,

Harry! she drops down: and I thought she was dead, too. And you never saw such a way as papa was in: he swore one of his great oaths: and he turned quite pale; and then he began to laugh somehow, and he told the Doctor to take his horse, and me to follow him; and we left him. And I looked back, and saw him dashing water out of the fountain on to mamma. Oh, she was so frightened!"

Musing upon this curious history—for my Lord Mohun's name was Henry to, and they called each other Frank and Harry often—and not a little disturbed and anxious, Esmond rode home. His dear lady was on the terrace still, one of her women with her, and my lord no longer there. There are steps and a little door thence down into the road. My lord passed, looking very ghastly, with a handkerchief over his head, and without his hat and periwig, which a groom carried, but his politeness did not desert him, and he made a bow to the lady above.

"Thank heaven, you are safe," she said.

"And so is Harry too, mamma," says little Frank,—"huzzay!"

Harry Esmond got off the horse to run to his mistress, as did little Frank, and one of the grooms took charge of the two beasts, while the other, hat and periwig in hand, walked by my lord's bridle to the front gate, which lay half-a-mile away.

"Oh, my boy! what a fright you have given me!" Lady Castlewood said, when Harry Esmond came up, greeting him with one of her shining looks and a voice of tender welcome; and she was so kind as to kiss the young man ('twas the second time she had so honoured him), and she walked into the house between him and her son, holding a hand of each.

After a repose of a couple of days, the Lord Mohun was so far recovered of his hurt as to be able to announce his departure for the next morning; when, accordingly, he took leave of Castlewood, proposing to

ride to London by easy stages, and lie two nights upon the road. His host treated him with a studied and ceremonious courtesy, certainly different from my lord's usual frank and careless demeanour; but there was no reason to suppose that the two lords parted otherwise than good friends, though Harry Esmond remarked that my Lord Viscount only saw his guest in company with other persons, and seemed to avoid being alone with him. Nor did he ride any distance with Lord Mohun, as his custom was with most of his friends, whom he was always eager to welcome and unwilling to lose: but contented himself, when his lordship's horses were announced, and their owner appeared, booted for his journey, to take a courteous leave of the ladies of Castlewood, by following the Lord Mohun downstairs to his horses, and by bowing and wishing him a good-day, in the court-yard. "I shall see you in London before very long, Mohun," my lord said, with a smile; "when we will settle our accounts together."

"Do not let them trouble you, Frank," said the other good-naturedly, and, holding out his hand, looked rather surprised at the grim and stately manner in which his host received his parting salutation; and so, followed by his people, he rode away.

Harry Esmond was witness of the departure. It was very different to my lord's coming, for which great preparation had been made (the old house putting on its best appearance to welcome its guest), and there was a sadness and constraint about all persons that day, which filled Mr. Esmond with gloomy forebodings and sad indefinite apprehensions. Lord Castlewood stood at the door, watching his guest and his people as they went out under the arch of the outer gate. When he was there, Lord Mohun turned once more; my Lord Viscount slowly raised his beaver and bowed. His face wore a peculiar livid look, Harry thought. He cursed and kicked away his dogs, which came jumping about him —then he walked up to the fountain in the centre of the court, and leaned against a pillar and looked into the basin. As Esmond crossed over to his own room, late

the chaplain's, on the other side of the court, and turned to enter in at the low door, he saw Lady Castlewood looking through the curtains of the great window of the drawing-room overhead, at my lord as he stood regarding the fountain. There was in the court a peculiar silence somehow; and the scene remained long in Esmond's memory:—the sky bright overhead; the buttresses of the building and the sun-dial casting shadow over the gilt *memento mori* inscribed underneath; the two dogs, a black greyhound and a spaniel nearly white, the one with his face up to the sun, and the other snuffing amongst the grass and stones, and my lord leaning over the fountain, which was bubbling audibly. 'Tis strange how that scene, and the sound of that fountain, remain fixed on the memory of a man who has beheld a hundred sights of splendour, and danger too, of which he has kept no account.

It was Lady Castlewood—she had been laughing all the morning, and especially gay and lively before her husband and his guest—who, as soon as the two gentlemen went together from her room, ran to Harry, the expression of her countenance quite changed now, and with a face and eyes full of care, and said, "Follow them, Harry, I am sure something has gone wrong." And so it was that Esmond was made an eavesdropper at this lady's orders: and retired to his own chamber, to give himself time in truth to try and compose a story which would soothe his mistress, for he could not but have his own apprehension that some serious quarrel was pending between the two gentlemen.

And now for several days the little company at Castlewood sat at table as of evenings: this care, though unnamed and invisible, being nevertheless present alway, in the minds of at least three persons there. My lord was exceeding gentle and kind. Whenever he quitted the room, his wife's eyes followed him. He behaved to her with a kind of mournful courtesy and kindness remarkable in one of his blunt ways and ordinary rough manner. He called her by her Christian name often and fondly, was very soft and gentle with the children,

especially with the boy, whom he did not love, and being lax about church generally, he went thither and performed all the offices (down even to listening to Dr. Tusher's sermon) with great devotion.

"He paces his room all night; what is it? Henry, find out what it is," Lady Castlewood said constantly to her young dependant. "He has sent three letters to London," she said, another day.

"Indeed, madam, they were to a lawyer," Harry answered, who knew of these letters, and had seen a part of the correspondence, which related to a new loan my lord was raising; and when the young man remonstrated with his patron, my lord said: "He was only raising money to pay off an old debt on the property, which must be discharged."

Regarding the money, Lady Castlewood was not in the least anxious. Few fond women feel money-distressed; indeed you can hardly give a woman a greater pleasure than to bid her pawn her diamonds for the man she loves; and I remember hearing Mr. Congreve say of my Lord Marlborough, that the reason why my lord was so successful with women as a young man, was because he took money of them. "There are few men who will make such a sacrifice for them," says Mr. Congreve, who knew a part of the sex pretty well.

Harry Esmond's vacation was just over, and, as hath been said, he was preparing to return to the University for his last term before taking his degree and entering into the Church. He had made up his mind for this office, not indeed with that reverence which becomes a man about to enter upon a duty so holy, but with a worldly spirit of acquiescence in the prudence of adopting that profession for his calling. But his reasoning was that he owed all to the family of Castlewood, and loved better to be near them than anywhere else in the world; that he might be useful to his benefactors, who had the utmost confidence in him and affection for him in return; that he might aid in bringing up the young heir of the house and acting as his governor; that he might continue to be his dear patron's and mistress's

friend and adviser, who both were pleased to say that they should ever look upon him as such; and so, by making himself useful to those he loved best, he proposed to console himself for giving up any schemes of ambition which he might have had in his own bosom. Indeed, his mistress had told him that she would not have him leave her; and whatever she commanded was will to him.

The Lady Castlewood's mind was greatly relieved in the last few days of this well-remembered holiday time, by my lord's announcing one morning, after the post had brought him letters from London, in a careless tone, that the Lord Mohun was gone to Paris, and was about to make a great journey in Europe; and though Lord Castlewood's own gloom did not wear off, or his behaviour alter, yet this cause of anxiety being removed from his lady's mind, she began to be more hopeful and easy in her spirits, striving too, with all her heart, and by all the means of soothing in her power, to call back my lord's cheerfulness and dissipate his moody humour.

He accounted for it himself, by saying that he was out of health; that he wanted to see his physician; that he would go to London, and consult Doctor Cheyne. It was agreed that his lordship and Harry Esmond should make the journey as far as London together; and of a Monday morning, the 10th of October, in the year 1700, they set forwards towards London on horseback. The day before being Sunday, and the rain pouring down, the family did not visit church; and at night my lord read the service to his family very finely, and with a peculiar sweetness and gravity—speaking the parting benediction, Harry thought, as solemn as ever he heard it. And he kissed and embraced his wife and children before they went to their own chambers with more fondness than he was ordinarily wont to show, and with a solemnity and feeling of which they thought in after days with no small comfort.

They took horse the next morning (after adieux from the family as tender as on the night previous), lay that night on the road, and entered London at nightfall; my

lord going to the "Trumpet," in the Cockpit, Whitehall, a house used by the military in his time as a young man, and accustomed by his lordship ever since.

An hour after my lord's arrival (which showed that his visit had been arranged beforehand), my lord's man of business arrived from Gray's Inn; and thinking that his patron might wish to be private with the lawyer, Esmond was for leaving them: but my lord said his business was short; introduced Mr. Esmond particularly to the lawyer, who had been engaged for the family in the old lord's time; who said that he had paid the money, as desired that day, to my Lord Mohun himself, at his lodgings in Bow Street; that his lordship had expressed some surprise, as it was not customary to employ lawyers, he said, in such transactions between men of honour; but nevertheless, he had returned my Lord Viscount's note of hand, which he held at his client's disposition.

"I thought the Lord Mohun had been in Paris!" cried Mr. Esmond, in great alarm and astonishment.

"He is come back at my invitation," said my Lord Viscount. "We have accounts to settle together."

"I pray heaven they are over, sir," says Esmond.

"Oh, quite," replied the other, looking hard at the young man. "He was rather troublesome about that money which I told you I had lost to him at play. And now 'tis paid, and we are quits on that score, and we shall meet good friends again."

"My lord," cried out Esmond, "I am sure you are deceiving me, and that there is a quarrel between the Lord Mohun and you."

"Quarrel—pish! We shall sup together this very night, and drink a bottle. Every man is ill-humoured who loses such a sum as I have lost. But now 'tis paid, and my anger is gone with it."

"Where shall we sup, sir?" says Harry.

"*We!* Let some gentlemen wait till they are asked," says my Lord Viscount, with a laugh. "You go to Duke Street, and see Mr. Betterton. You love the play, I know. Leave me to follow my own devices: and in

the morning we'll breakfast together, with what appetite we may, as the play says."

"By G—! my lord, I will not leave you this night," says Harry Esmond. "I think I know the cause of your dispute. I swear to you 'tis nothing. On the very day the accident befell Lord Mohun, I was speaking to him about it. I know that nothing has passed but idle gallantry on his part."

"You know that nothing has passed but idle gallantry between Lord Mohun and my wife," says my lord, in a thundering voice—"you knew of this and did not tell me?"

"I knew more of it than my dear mistress did herself, sir—a thousand times more. How was she, who was as innocent as a child, to know what was the meaning of the covert addresses of a villain?"

"A villain he is, you allow, and would have taken my wife away from me."

"Sir, she is as pure as an angel," cried young Esmond.

"Have I said a word against her?" shrieks out my lord. "Did I ever doubt that she was pure? It would have been the last day of her life when I did. Do you fancy I think that *she* would go astray? No, she hasn't passion enough for that. She neither sins nor forgives. I know her temper—and now I've lost her, by heaven I love her ten thousand times more than ever I did—yes, when she was young and as beautiful as an angel—when she smiled at me in her old father's house, and used to lie in wait for me there as I came from hunting—when I used to fling my head down on her little knees and cry like a child on her lap—and swear I would reform, and drink no more, and play no more, and follow women no more; when all the men of the Court used to be following her—when she used to look, with her child, more beautiful, by George, than the Madonna in the Queen's Chapel. I am not good like her, I know it. Who is—by heaven, who is? I tired and wearied her, I know that very well. I could not talk to her. You men of wit and books could do that, and I couldn't—I felt I

couldn't. Why, when you was but a boy of fifteen I could hear you two together talking your poetry and your books till I was in such a rage that I was fit to strangle you. But you were always a good lad, Harry, and I loved you, you know I did. And I felt she didn't belong to me: and the children don't. And I besotted myself, and gambled, and drank, and took to all sorts of devilries out of despair and fury. And now comes this Mohun, and she likes him, I know she likes him."

"Indeed and on my soul, you are wrong, sir," Esmond cried.

"She takes letters from him," cries my lord—"look here, Harry," and he pulled out a paper with a brown stain of blood upon it. "It fell from him that day he wasn't killed. One of the grooms picked it up from the ground and gave it me. Here it is in their d——d comedy jargon. 'Divine Gloriana—Why look so coldly on your slave who adores you? Have you no compassion on the tortures you have seen me suffering? Do you vouchsafe no reply to billets that are written with the blood of my heart.' She had more letters from him."

"But she answered none," cries Esmond.

"That's not Mohun's fault," says my lord, "and I will be revenged on him, as God's in heaven, I will."

"For a light word or two, will you risk your lady's honour and your family's happiness, my lord?" Esmond interposed beseechingly.

"Psha—there shall be no question of my wife's honour," said my lord; "we can quarrel on plenty of grounds beside. If I live, that villain will be punished; if I fall, my family will be only the better: there will only be a spendthrift the less to keep in the world: and Frank has better teaching than his father. My mind is made up, Harry Esmond, and whatever the event is, I am easy about it. I leave my wife and you as guardians to the children."

Seeing that my lord was bent upon pursuing this quarrel, and that no entreaties would draw him from it, Harry Esmond (then of a hotter and more impetuous nature than now, when care, and reflection, and grey

hairs have calmed him) thought it was his duty to stand by his kind, generous patron, and said, "My lord, if you are determined upon war, you must not go into it alone. 'Tis the duty of our house to stand by its chief; and I should neither forgive myself nor you if you did not call me, or I should be absent from you at a moment of danger."

"Why, Harry, my poor boy, you are bred for a parson," says my lord, taking Esmond by the hand very kindly; "and it were a great pity that you should meddle in the matter."

"Your lordship thought of being a churchman once," Harry answered, "and your father's orders did not prevent him fighting at Castlewood against the Roundheads. Your enemies are mine, sir; I can use the foils, as you have seen, indifferently well, and don't think I shall be afraid when the buttons are taken off 'em." And then Harry explained, with some blushes and hesitation (for the matter was delicate, and he feared lest, by having put himself forward in the quarrel, he might have offended his patron), how he had himself expostulated with the Lord Mohun, and proposed to measure swords with him if need were, and he could not be got to withdraw peaceably in this dispute. "And I should have beat him, sir," says Harry, laughing. "He never could parry that *botte* I brought from Cambridge. Let us have half-an-hour of it, and rehearse—I can teach it your lordship: 'tis the most delicate point in the world, and if you miss it, your adversary's sword is through you."

"By George, Harry, you ought to be the head of the house," says my lord, gloomily. "You had been a better Lord Castlewood than a lazy sot like me," he added, drawing his hand across his eyes, and surveying his kinsman with very kind and affectionate glances.

"Let us take our coats off and have half-an-hour's practice before nightfall," says Harry, after thankfully grasping his patron's manly hand.

"You are but a little bit of a lad," says my lord, good-humouredly; "but, in faith, I believe you could

do for that fellow. No, my boy," he continued. "I'll have none of your feints and tricks of stabbing: I can use my sword pretty well too, and will fight my own quarrel my own way."

"But I shall be by to see fair play?" cries Harry.

"Yes, God bless you—you shall be by."

"When is it, sir?" says Harry, for he saw that the matter had been arranged privately and beforehand by my lord.

"'Tis arranged thus: I sent off a courier to Jack Westbury to say that I wanted him specially. He knows for what, and will be here presently, and drink part of that bottle of sack. Then we shall go to the theatre in Duke Street, where we shall meet Mohun; and then we shall all go sup at the 'Rose' or the 'Greyhound.' Then we shall call for cards, and there will be probably a difference over the cards—and then, God help us!—either a wicked villain and traitor shall go out of the world, or a poor worthless devil, that doesn't care to remain in it. I am better away, Hal—my wife will be all the happier when I am gone," says my lord, with a groan, that tore the heart of Harry Esmond, so that he fairly broke into a sob over his patron's kind hand.

"The business was talked over with Mohun before he left home—Castlewood I mean"—my lord went on. "I took the letter in to him, which I had read, and I charged him with his villany, and he could make no denial of it, only he said that my wife was innocent."

"And so she is; before heaven, my lord, she is!" cries Harry.

"No doubt, no doubt. They always are," says my lord. "No doubt, when she heard he was killed, she fainted from accident."

"But, my lord, *my* name is Harry," cried out Esmond, burning red. "You told my lady, 'Harry was killed!'"

"Damnation! shall I fight you too?" shouts my lord in a fury. "Are you, you little serpent, warmed by my fire, going to sting—*you?*—No, my boy, you're an honest boy; you are a good boy." (And here he broke from rage into tears even more cruel to see.) "You are

an honest boy, and I love you; and, by heavens, I am so wretched that I don't care what sword it is that ends me. Stop, here's Jack Westbury. Well, Jack! Welcome, old boy! This is my kinsman, Harry Esmond."

"Who brought your bowls for you at Castlewood, sir!" says Harry, bowing; and the three gentlemen sat down and drank of that bottle of sack which was prepared for them.

"Harry is number three," says my lord. "You needn't be afraid of him, Jack." And the Colonel gave a look, as much as to say, "Indeed, he don't look as if I need." And then my lord explained what he had only told by hints before. When he quarrelled with Lord Mohun he was indebted to his lordship in a sum of sixteen hundred pounds, for which Lord Mohun said he proposed to wait until my Lord Viscount should pay him. My lord had raised the sixteen hundred pounds and sent them to Lord Mohun that morning, and before quitting home had put his affairs into order, and was now quite ready to abide the issue of the quarrel.

When we had drunk a couple of bottles of sack, a coach was called, and the three gentlemen went to the Duke's Playhouse, as agreed. The play was one of Mr. Wycherley's—"Love in a Wood."

Harry Esmond has thought of that play ever since with a kind of terror, and of Mrs. Bracegirdle, the actress who performed the girl's part in the comedy. She was disguised as a page, and came and stood before the gentlemen as they sat on the stage, and looked over her shoulder with a pair of arch black eyes, and laughed at my lord, and asked what ailed the gentleman from the country, and had he had bad news from Bullock fair?

Between the acts of the play the gentlemen crossed over and conversed freely. There were two of Lord Mohun's party, Captain Macartney, in a military habit, and a gentleman in a suit of blue velvet and silver in a fair periwig, with a rich fall of point of Venice lace—my Lord the Earl of Warwick and Holland. My lord had a paper of oranges, which he ate and offered to the

actresses, joking with them. And Mrs. Bracegirdle, when my Lord Mohun said something rude, turned on him, and asked him what he did there, and whether he and his friends had come to stab anybody else, as they did poor Will Mountford? My lord's dark face grew darker at this taunt, and wore a mischievous fatal look. They that saw it remembered it, and said so afterward.

When the play was ended the two parties joined company; and my Lord Castlewood then proposed that they should go to a tavern and sup. Lockit's, the "Greyhound," in Charing Cross, was the house selected. All six marched together that way; the three lords going a-head, Lord Mohun's captain, and Colonel Westbury, and Harry Esmond, walking behind them. As they walked, Westbury told Harry Esmond about his old friend Dick the Scholar, who had got promotion, and was Cornet of the Guards, and had wrote a book called the *Christian Hero*, and had all the Guards to laugh at him for his pains, for the Christian Hero was breaking the commandments constantly, Westbury said, and had fought one or two duels already. And, in a lower tone, Westbury besought young Mr. Esmond to take no part in the quarrel. "There was no need for more seconds than one," said the Colonel, "and the Captain or Lord Warwick might easily withdraw." But Harry said no; he was bent on going through with the business. Indeed, he had a plan in his head, which, he thought, might prevent my Lord Viscount from engaging.

They went in at the bar of the tavern, and desired a private room and wine and cards, and when the drawer had brought these, they began to drink and call healths, and as long as the servants were in the room appeared very friendly.

Harry Esmond's plan was no other than to engage in talk with Lord Mohun, to insult him, and so get the first of the quarrel. So when cards were proposed he offered to play. "Psha!" says my Lord Mohun (whether wishing to save Harry, or not choosing to try the *botte de Jésuite*, it is not to be known)—"Young gentlemen

from College should not play these stakes. You are too young."

"Who dares say I am too young?" broke out Harry. "Is your lordship afraid?"

"Afraid!" cries out Mohun.

But my good Lord Viscount saw the move—"I'll play you for ten moidores, Mohun," says he. "You silly boy, we don't play for groats here as you do at Cambridge." And Harry, who had no such sum in his pocket (for his half-year's salary was always pretty well spent before it was due), fell back with rage and vexation in his heart that he had not money enough to stake.

"I'll stake the young gentleman a crown," says the Lord Mohun's captain.

"I thought crowns were rather scarce with the gentlemen of the army," says Harry.

"Do they birch at College?" says the Captain.

"They birch fools," says Harry, "and they cane bullies, and they fling puppies into the water."

"Faith, then there 's some escapes drowning," says the Captain, who was an Irishman; and all the gentlemen began to laugh, and made poor Harry only more angry.

My Lord Mohun presently snuffed a candle. It was when the drawers brought in fresh bottles and glasses and were in the room—on which my Lord Viscount said —"The Deuce take you, Mohun, how damned awkward you are. Light the candle, you drawer."

"Damned awkward is a damned awkward expression, my lord," says the other. "Town gentlemen don't use such words—or ask pardon if they do."

"I'm a country gentleman," says my Lord Viscount.

"I see it by your manner," says my Lord Mohun. "No man shall say damned awkward to me."

"I fling the words in your face, my lord," says the other; "shall I send the cards too?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen! before the servants?" cry out Colonel Westbury and my Lord Warwick in a breath. The drawers go out of the room hastily. They tell the people below of the quarrel upstairs.

"Enough has been said," says Colonel Westbury. "Will your lordships meet to-morrow morning?"

"Will my Lord Castlewood withdraw his words?" asks the Earl of Warwick.

"My Lord Castlewood will be —— first," says Colonel Westbury.

"Then we having nothing for it. Take notice, gentlemen, there have been outrageous words—reparation asked and refused."

"And refused," says my Lord Castlewood, putting on his hat. "Where shall the meeting be? and when?"

"Since my lord refuses me satisfaction, which I deeply regret, there is no time so good as now," says my Lord Mohun. "Let us have chairs and go to Leicester Field."

"Are your lordship and I to have the honour of exchanging a pass or two?" says Colonel Westbury, with a low bow to my Lord of Warwick and Holland.

"It is an honour for me," says my lord, with a profound congee, "to be matched with a gentleman who has been at Mons and Namur."

"Will your Reverence permit me to give you a lesson?" says the Captain.

"Nay, nay, gentlemen, two on a side are plenty," says Harry's patron. "Spare the boy, Captain Macartney," and he shook Harry's hand—for the last time, save one, in his life.

At the bar of the tavern all the gentlemen stopped, and my Lord Viscount said, laughing, to the barwoman, that those cards set people sadly a-quarrelling; but that the dispute was over now, and the parties were all going away to my Lord Mohun's house, in Bow Street, to drink a bottle more before going to bed.

A half-dozen of chairs were now called, and the six gentlemen stepping into them, the word was privately given to the chairmen to go to Leicester Field, where the gentlemen were set down opposite the "Standard Tavern." It was midnight, and the town was a-bed by this time, and only a few lights in the windows of the houses; but the night was bright enough for the un-

happy purpose which the disputants came about; and so all six entered into that fatal square, the chairmen standing without the railing and keeping the gate, lest any persons should disturb the meeting.

All that happened there hath been matter of public notoriety, and is recorded, for warning to lawless men, in the annals of our country. After being engaged for not more than a couple of minutes, as Harry Esmond thought (though being occupied at the time with his own adversary's point, which was active, he may not have taken a good note of time), a cry from the chairmen without, who were smoking their pipes, and leaning over the railings of the field as they watched the dim combat within, announced that some catastrophe had happened, which caused Esmond to drop his sword and look round, at which moment his enemy wounded him in the right hand. But the young man did not heed this hurt much, and ran up to the place where he saw his dear master was down.

My Lord Mohun was standing over him.

"Are you much hurt, Frank?" he asked in a hollow voice.

"I believe I'm a dead man," my lord said from the ground.

"No, no, not so," says the other; "and I call God to witness, Frank Esmond, that I would have asked your pardon, had you but given me a chance. In — in the first cause of our falling out, I swear that no one was to blame but me, and—and that my lady——"

"Hush!" says my poor Lord Viscount, lifting himself on his elbow and speaking faintly. "'Twas a dispute about the cards—the cursed cards. Harry my boy, are you wounded, too? God help thee! I loved thee, Harry, and thou must watch over my little Frank—and—and carry this little heart to my wife."

And here my dear lord felt in his breast for a locket he wore there, and, in the act, fell back fainting.

We were all at this terrified, thinking him dead; but Esmond and Colonel Westbury bade the chairmen come into the field; and so my lord was carried to one Mr.

Aimes, a surgeon in Long Acre, who kept a bath, and there the house was wakened up, and the victim of this quarrel carried in.

My Lord Viscount was put to bed, and his wound looked to by the surgeon, who seemed both kind and skilful. When he had looked to my lord, he bandaged up Harry Esmond's hand (who, from loss of blood, had fainted too, in the house, and may have been some time unconscious); and when the young man came to himself, you may be sure he eagerly asked what news there were of his dear patron; on which the surgeon carried him to the room where the Lord Castlewood lay; who had already sent for a priest; and desired earnestly, they said, to speak with his kinsman. He was lying on a bed, very pale and ghastly, with that fixed, fatal look in his eyes, which betokens death; and faintly beckoning all the other persons away from him with his hand, and crying out "Only Harry Esmond," the hand fell powerless down on the coverlet, as Harry came forward, and knelt down and kissed it.

"Thou art all but a priest, Harry," my Lord Viscount gasped out, with a faint smile, and pressure of his cold hand. "Are they all gone? Let me make thee a death-bed confession."

And with sacred Death waiting, as it were, at the bed-foot, as an awful witness of his words, the poor dying soul gasped out his last wishes in respect of his family; —his humble profession of contrition for his faults;— and his charity towards the world he was leaving. Some things he said concerned Harry Esmond as much as they astonished him. And my Lord Viscount, sinking visibly, was in the midst of these strange confessions, when the ecclesiastic for whom my lord had sent, Mr. Atterbury, arrived.

This gentleman had reached to no great church dignity as yet, but was only preacher at St. Bride's, drawing all the town thither by his eloquent sermons. He was godson to my lord, who had been pupil to his father; had paid a visit to Castlewood from Oxford more than once; and it was by his advice, I think, that Harry Esmond

was sent to Cambridge, rather than to Oxford, of which place Mr. Atterbury, though a distinguished member, spoke but ill.

Our messenger found the good priest already at his books at five o'clock in the morning, and he followed the man eagerly to the house where my poor Lord Viscount lay—Esmond watching him, and taking his dying words from his mouth.

My lord, hearing of Mr. Atterbury's arrival, and squeezing Esmond's hand, asked to be alone with the priest; and Esmond left them there for this solemn interview. You may be sure that his own prayers and grief accompanied that dying benefactor. My lord had said to him that which confounded the young man—informed him of a secret which greatly concerned him. Indeed, after hearing it, he had had good cause for doubt and dismay; for mental anguish as well as resolution. While the colloquy between Mr. Atterbury and his dying penitent took place within, an immense contest of perplexity was agitating Lord Castlewood's young companion.

At the end of an hour—it may be more—Mr. Atterbury came out of the room, looking very hard at Esmond, and holding a paper.

"He is on the brink of God's awful judgment," the priest whispered. "He has made his breast clean to me. He forgives and believes, and makes restitution. Shall it be in public? Shall we call a witness to sign it?"

"God knows," sobbed out the young man, "my dearest lord has only done me kindness all his life."

The priest put the paper into Esmond's hand. He looked at it. It swam before his eyes.

"'Tis a confession," he said.

"'Tis as you please," said Mr. Atterbury.

There was a fire in the room, where the cloths were drying for the baths, and there lay a heap in a corner, saturated with the blood of my dear lord's body. Esmond went to the fire, and threw the paper into it. 'Twas a great chimney with glazed Dutch tiles. How

we remember such trifles in such awful moments!—the scrap of the book that we have read in a great grief—the taste of that last dish that we have eaten before a duel, or some such supreme meeting or parting. On the Dutch tiles at the Bagnio was a rude picture representing Jacob in hairy gloves, cheating Isaac of Esau's birthright. The burning paper lighted it up.

"'Tis only a confession, Mr. Atterbury," said the young man. He leaned his head against the mantelpiece: a burst of tears came to his eyes. They were the first he had shed as he sat by his lord, scared by this calamity, and more yet by what the poor dying gentleman had told him, and shocked to think that he should be the agent of bringing this double misfortune on those he loved best.

"Let us go to him," said Mr. Esmond. And accordingly they went into the next chamber, where by this time the dawn had broke, which showed my lord's poor pale face and wild appealing eyes, that wore that awful fatal look of coming dissolution. The surgeon was with him. He went into the chamber as Atterbury came out thence. My Lord Viscount turned round his sick eyes towards Esmond. It choked the other to hear that rattle in his throat.

"My Lord Viscount," says Mr. Atterbury, "Mr. Esmond wants no witnesses, and hath burned the paper."

"My dearest master!" Esmond said, kneeling down, and taking his hand and kissing it.

My Lord Viscount sprang up in his bed, and flung his arms round Esmond. "God bl—bless——," was all he said. The blood rushed from his mouth, deluging the young man. My dearest lord was no more. He was gone with a blessing on his lips, and love and repentance and kindness in his manly heart.

"*Benedicti benedicentes*," says Mr. Atterbury, and the young man, kneeling at the bedside, groaned out an "Amen."

"Who shall take the news to her?" was Mr. Esmond's next thought. And on this he besought Mr.

Atterbury to bear the tidings to Castlewood. He could not face his mistress himself with those dreadful news. Mr. Atterbury complying kindly, Esmond writ a hasty note on his table-book to my lord's man, bidding him get the horses for Mr. Atterbury, and ride with him, and send Esmond's own valise to the Gatehouse prison, whither he resolved to go and give himself up.

MR. JOSEPH ADDISON

(Book II, Chapter XI)

[One of Thackeray's continuous aims was a certain familiar and, as it were, friendly treatment of the past; as if it were the present. He sought his age of Queen Anne, not because it was romantic, but because it was realistic. His romances, therefore, are everywhere relieved by sketches and episodes which have little to do with the story; and merely express the author's longing to mingle with those great dead who seem so much alive. The portraits of Sir Richard Steele and Lord Bolingbroke are both most vivid and spirited; but perhaps the most complete, as well as the most detachable, is the sketch of Addison which is here subjoined.]

The gentlemen-ushers had a table at Kensington, and the Guard a very splendid dinner daily at St. James's, at either of which ordinaries Esmond was free to dine. Dick Steele liked the Guard-table better than his own at the gentlemen-ushers', where there was less wine and more ceremony; and Esmond had many a jolly afternoon in company of his friend, and a hundred times at least saw Dick into his chair. If there is verity in wine, according to the old adage, what an amiable-natured character Dick's must have been! In proportion as he took in wine he overflowed with kindness. His talk was not witty so much as charming. He never said a word that could anger anybody, and only became the more benevolent the more tipsy he grew. Many of the wags derided the poor fellow in his cups, and chose him as a butt for their satire: but there was a kindness

about him, and a sweet playful fancy, that seemed to Esmond far more charming than the pointed talk of the brightest wits, with their elaborate repartees and affected severities. I think Steele shone rather than sparkled. Those famous *beaux-esprits* of the coffee-houses (Mr. William Congreve, for instance, when his gout and his grandeur permitted him to come among us) would make many brilliant hits—half-a-dozen in a night sometimes—but, like sharp-shooters, when they had fired their shot, they were obliged to retire under cover till their pieces were loaded again, and wait till they got another chance at their enemy; whereas Dick never thought that his bottle companion was a butt to aim at—only a friend to shake by the hand. The poor fellow had half the town in his confidence; everybody knew everything about his loves and his debts, his creditors or his mistress's obduracy. When Esmond first came on to the town, honest Dick was all flames and raptures for a young lady, a West India fortune, whom he married. In a couple of years the lady was dead, the fortune was all but spent, and the honest widower was as eager in pursuit of a new paragon of beauty as if he had never courted and married and buried the last one.

Quitting the Guard-table one Sunday afternoon, when by chance Dick had a sober fit upon him, he and his friend were making their way down Germain Street, and Dick all of a sudden left his companion's arm, and ran after a gentleman who was poring over a folio volume at the book-shop near to St. James's Church. He was a fair, tall man, in a snuff-coloured suit, with a plain sword, very sober, and almost shabby in appearance—at least when compared to Captain Steele, who loved to adorn his jolly round person with the finest of clothes, and shone in scarlet and gold lace. The Captain rushed up, then, to the student of the book-stall, took him in his arms, hugged him, and would have kissed him—for Dick was always hugging and bussing his friends—but the other stepped back with a flush on his pale face, seeming to decline this public manifestation of Steele's regard.

"My dearest Joe, where hast thou hidden thyself this age?" cries the Captain, still holding both his friend's hands; "I have been languishing for thee this fortnight."

"A fortnight is not an age, Dick," says the other, very good-humouredly. (He had light blue eyes, extraordinary bright, and a face perfectly regular and handsome, like a tinted statue.) "And I have been hiding myself—where do you think?"

"What! not across the water, my dear Joe?" says Steele, with a look of great alarm: "thou knowest I have always——"

"No," says his friend, interrupting him with a smile: "we are not come to such straits as that, Dick. I have been hiding, sir, at a place where people never think of finding you—at my own lodgings, whither I am going to smoke a pipe now and drink a glass of sack; will your honour come?"

"Harry Esmond, come hither," cries out Dick. "Thou hast heard me talk over and over again of my dearest Joe, my guardian angel?"

"Indeed," says Mr. Esmond, with a bow, "it is not from you only that I have learnt to admire Mr. Addison. We loved good poetry at Cambridge as well as at Oxford; and I have some of yours by heart, though I have put on a red coat. . . . 'O qui canoro blandius Orpheo vocale ducis carmen;' shall I go on, sir?" says Mr. Esmond, who, indeed, had read and loved the charming Latin poems of Mr. Addison, as every scholar of that time knew and admired them.

"This is Captain Esmond, who was at Blenheim," says Steele.

"Lieutenant Esmond," says the other, with a low bow, "at Mr. Addison's service."

"I have heard of you," says Mr. Addison, with a smile; as, indeed, everybody about town had heard that unlucky story about Esmond's dowager aunt and the Duchess.

"We were going to the 'George,' to take a bottle before the play," says Steele: "wilt thou be one, Joe?"

Mr. Addison said his own lodgings were hard by,

where he was still rich enough to give a good bottle of wine to his friends; and invited the two gentlemen to his apartment in the Haymarket, whither we accordingly went.

"I shall get credit with my landlady," says he, with a smile, "when she sees two such fine gentlemen as you come up my stair." And he politely made his visitors welcome to his apartment, which was indeed but a shabby one, though no grandee of the land could receive his guests with a more perfect and courtly grace than this gentleman. A frugal dinner, consisting of a slice of meat and a penny loaf, was awaiting the owner of the lodgings. "My wine is better than my meat," says Mr. Addison; "my Lord Halifax sent me the Burgundy." And he set a bottle and glasses before his friends, and ate his simple dinner in a very few minutes, after which the three fell to, and began to drink. "You see," says Mr. Addison, pointing to his writing-table, whereon was a map of the action at Hochstedt, and several other gazettes and pamphlets relating to the battle, "that I, too, am busy about your affairs, Captain. I am engaged as a poetical gazetteer, to say truth, and am writing a poem on the campaign."

So Esmond, at the request of his host, told him what he knew about the famous battle, drew the river on the table *aliquo mero*, and with the aid of some bits of tobacco-pipe showed the advance of the left wing, where he had been engaged.

A sheet or two of the verses lay already on the table beside our bottle and glasses, and Dick having plentifully refreshed himself from the latter, took up the pages of manuscript, writ out with scarce a blot or correction, in the author's slim, neat handwriting, and began to read therefrom with great emphasis and volubility. At pauses of the verse, the enthusiastic reader stopped and fired off a great salvo of applause.

Esmond smiled at the enthusiasm of Addison's friend. "You are like the German Burghers," says he, "and the Princes on the Mozelle; when our army came to a halt, they always sent a deputation to compliment the

chief, and fired a salute with all their artillery from their walls."

"And drunk the great chief's health afterward, did not they?" says Captain Steele, gaily filling up a bumper;—he never was tardy at that sort of acknowledgment of a friend's merit.

"And the Duke, since you will have me act his Grace's part," says Mr. Addison, with a smile, and something of a blush, "pledged his friends in return. Most Serene Elector of Covent Garden, I drink to your Highness's health," and he filled himself a glass. Joseph required scarce more pressing than Dick to that sort of amusement; but the wine never seemed at all to fluster Mr. Addison's brains; it only unloosed his tongue: whereas Captain Steele's head and speech were quite overcome by a single bottle.

No matter what the verses were, and to say truth, Mr. Esmond found some of them more than indifferent, Dick's enthusiasm for his chief never faltered, and in every line from Addison's pen, Steel found a masterstroke. By the time Dick had come to that part of the poem, wherein the bard describes as blandly as though he were recording a dance at the opera, or a harmless bout of bucolic cudgelling at a village fair, that bloody and ruthless part of our campaign, with the remembrance whereof every soldier who bore a part in it must sicken with shame—when we were ordered to ravage and lay waste the Elector's country; and with fire and murder, slaughter and crime, a great part of his dominions was overrun; when Dick came to the lines—

> In vengeance roused the soldier fills his hand
> With sword and fire, and ravages the land:
> In crackling flames a thousand harvests burn,
> A thousand villages to ashes turn.
> To the thick woods the woolly flocks retreat,
> And mixed with bellowing herds confusedly bleat.
> Their trembling lords the common shade partake,
> And cries of infants sound in every brake.
> The listening soldier fixed in sorrow stands,
> Loth to obey his leader's just commands.
> The leader grieves, by generous pity swayed,
> To see his just commands so well obeyed;

by this time wine and friendship had brought poor Dick to a a perfectly maudlin state, and he hiccupped out the last line with a tenderness that set one of his auditors a-laughing.

"I admire the licence of your poets," says Esmond to Mr. Addison. (Dick, after reading of the verses, was fain to go off, insisting on kissing his two dear friends before his departure, and reeling away with his periwig over his eyes.) "I admire your art: the murder of the campaign is done to military music, like a battle at the opera, and the virgins shriek in harmony, as our victorious grenadiers march into their villages. Do you know what a scene it was?"—(by this time, perhaps, the wine had warmed Mr. Esmond's head too,)—"what a triumph you are celebrating? what scenes of shame and horror were enacted, over which the commander's genius presided, as calm as though he didn't belong to our sphere? You talk of the 'listening soldier fixed in sorrow,' the 'leader's grief swayed by generous pity;' to my belief the leader cared no more for bleating flocks than he did for infants' cries, and many of our ruffians butchered one or the other with equal alacrity. I was ashamed of my trade when I saw those horrors perpetrated, which came under every man's eyes. You hew out of your polished verses a stately image of smiling victory; I tell you 'tis an uncouth, distorted, savage idol; hideous, bloody, and barbarous. The rites performed before it are shocking to think of. You great poets should show it as it is—ugly and horrible, not beautiful and serene. Oh, sir, had you made the campaign, believe me, you never would have sung it so."

During this little outbreak, Mr. Addison was listening, smoking out of his long pipe, and smiling very placidly. "What would you have?" says he. "In our polished days, and according to the rules of art, 'tis impossible that the Muse should depict tortures or begrime her hands with the horrors of war. These are indicated rather than described; as in the Greek tragedies, that, I daresay, you have read (and sure there can be no more elegant specimens of composition), Agamem-

non is slain, or Medea's children destroyed, away from the scene;—the chorus occupying the stage and singing of the action to pathetic music. Something of this I attempt, my dear sir, in my humble way: 'tis a panegyric I mean to write, not a satire. Were I to sing as you would have me, the town would tear the poet in pieces, and burn his book by the hands of the common hangman. Do you not use tobacco? Of all the weeds grown on earth, sure the nicotian is the most soothing and salutary. We must paint our great Duke," Mr. Addison went on, "not as a man, which no doubt he is, with weaknesses like the rest of us, but as a hero. 'Tis in a triumph, not a battle, that your humble servant is riding his sleek Pegasus. We college poets trot, you know, on very easy nags; it hath been, time out of mind, part of the poet's profession to celebrate the actions of heroes in verse, and to sing the deeds which you men of war perform. I must follow the rules of my art, and the composition of such a strain as this must be harmonious and majestic, not familiar, or too near the vulgar truth. Si parva licet: if Virgil could invoke the divine Augustus, a humbler poet from the banks of the Isis may celebrate a victory and a conqueror of our own nation, in whose triumphs every Briton has a share, and whose glory and genius contributes to every citizen's individual honour. When hath there been, since our Henrys' and Edwards' days, such a great feat of arms as that from which you yourself have brought away marks of distinction? If 'tis in my power to sing that song worthily, I will do so, and be thankful to my Muse. If I fail as a poet, as a Briton at least I will show my loyalty, and fling up my cap and huzzah for the conqueror:

> ————"'Rheni pacator et Istri,
> Omnis in hoc uno variis discordia cessit
> Ordinibus; laetatur eques, plauditque senator,
> Votaque patricio certant plebeia favori.'"

"There were as brave men on that field," says Mr. Esmond (who never could be made to love the Duke of

Marlborough, nor to forget those stories which he used to hear in his youth regarding that great chief's selfishness and treachery)—"There were men at Blenheim as good as the leader, whom neither knights nor senators applauded, nor voices plebeian or patrician favoured, and who lie there forgotten, under the clods. What poet is there to sing them?"

"To sing the gallant souls of heroes sent to Hades!" says Mr. Addison with a smile. "Would you celebrate them all? If I may venture to question anything in such an admirable work, the catalogue of the ships in Homer hath always appeared to me as somewhat wearisome; what had the poem been, supposing the writer had chronicled the names of captains, lieutenants, rank and file? One of the greatest of a great man's qualities is success; 'tis the result of all the others; 'tis a latent power in him which compels the favour of the gods, and subjugates fortune. Of all his gifts I admire that one in the great Marlborough. To be brave? every man is brave. But in being victorious, as he is, I fancy there is something divine. In presence of the occasion, the great soul of the leader shines out, and the god is confessed. Death itself respects him, and passes by him to lay others low. War and carnage flee before him to ravage other parts of the field, as Hector from before the divine Achilles. You say he hath no pity; no more have the gods, who are above it, and superhuman. The fainting battle gathers strength at his aspect; and, wherever he rides, victory charges with him."

A couple of days after, when Mr. Esmond revisited his poetic friend, he found this thought, struck out in the fervour of conversation, improved and shaped into those famous lines, which are in truth the noblest in the poem of the "Campaign." As the two gentlemen sat engaged in talk, Mr. Addison solacing himself with his customary pipe, the little maid-servant that waited on his lodging came up, preceding a gentleman in fine laced clothes, that had evidently been figuring at Court or a great man's levée. The courtier coughed a little at the smoke of the pipe, and looked round the room

curiously, which was shabby enough, as was the owner in his worn, snuff-coloured suit and plain tie-wig.

"How goes on the magnum opus, Mr. Addison?" says the Court gentleman on looking down at the papers that were on the table.

"We were but now over it," says Addison (the greatest courtier in the land could not have a more splendid politeness, or greater dignity of manner). "Here is the plan," says he, "on the table: hâc ibat Simois, here ran the little river Nebel: hic est Sigeia tellus, here are Tallard's quarters, at the bowl of this pipe, at the attack of which Captain Esmond was present. I have the honour to introduce him to Mr. Boyle; and Mr. Esmond was but now depicting aliquo proelia mixta mero, when you came in." In truth, the two gentlemen had been so engaged when the visitor arrived, and Addison, in his smiling way, speaking of Mr. Webb, colonel of Esmond's regiment (who commanded a brigade in the action, and greatly distinguished himself there), was lamenting that he could find never a suitable rhyme for Webb, otherwise the brigade should have had a place in the poet's verses. "And for you, you are but a lieutenant," says Addison, "and the Muse can't occupy herself with any gentleman under the rank of a field officer."

Mr. Boyle was all impatient to hear, saying that my Lord Treasurer and my Lord Halifax were equally anxious; and Addison, blushing, began reading of his verses, and, I suspect, knew their weak parts as well as the most critical hearer. When he came to the lines describing the angel that

> Inspired repulsed battalions to engage
> And taught the doubtful battle where to rage,

he read with great animation, looking at Esmond, as much as to say, "You know where that simile came from—from our talk, and our bottle of Burgundy, the other day."

The poet's two hearers were caught with enthusiasm, and applauded the verses with all their might. The gentleman of the Court sprang up in great delight.

"Not a word more, my dear sir," says he. "Trust me with the papers—I'll defend them with my life. Let me read them over to my Lord Treasurer, whom I am appointed to see in half-an-hour. I venture to promise, the verses shall lose nothing by my reading, and then, sir, we shall see whether Lord Halifax has a right to complain that his friend's pension is no longer paid." And without more ado, the courtier in lace seized the manuscript pages, placed them in his breast with his ruffled hand over his heart, executed a most gracious wave of the hat with the disengaged hand, and smiled and bowed out of the room, leaving an odour of pomander behind him.

"Does not the chamber look quite dark?" says Addison, surveying it, "after the glorious appearance and disappearance of that gracious messenger? Why, he illuminated the whole room. Your scarlet, Mr. Esmond, will bear any light; but this threadbare old coat of mine, how very worn it looked under the glare of that splendour! I wonder whether they will do anything for me?" he continued. "When I came out of Oxford into the world, my patrons promised me great things; and you see where their promises have landed me, in a lodging up two pair of stairs, with a sixpenny dinner from the cook's shop. Well, I suppose this promise will go after the others, and Fortune will jilt me, as the jade has been doing any time these seven years. 'I puff the prostitute away,'" says he, smiling, and blowing a cloud out of his pipe. "There is no hardship in poverty, Esmond, that is not bearable; no hardship even in honest dependence that an honest man may not put up with. I came out of the lap of Alma Mater, puffed up with her praises of me, and thinking to make a figure in the world with the parts and learning which had got me no small name in our college. The world is the ocean, and Isis and Charwell are but little drops, of which the sea takes no account. My reputation ended a mile beyond Maudlin Tower; no one took note of me; and I learned this at least, to bear up against evil fortune with a cheerful heart. Friend Dick hath made a

figure in the world, and has passed me in the race long ago. What matters a little name or a little fortune? There is no fortune that a philosopher cannot endure. I have been not unknown as a scholar, and yet forced to live by turning bear-leader, and teaching a boy to spell. What then? The life was not pleasant, but possible—the bear was bearable. Should this venture fail, I will go back to Oxford; and some day, when you are a general, you shall find me a curate in a cassock and bands, and I shall welcome your honour to my cottage in the country, and to a mug of penny ale. 'Tis not poverty that 's the hardest to bear, or the least happy lot in life," says Mr. Addison, shaking the ash out of his pipe. "See, my pipe is smoked out. Shall we have another bottle? I have still a couple in the cupboard, and of the right sort. No more?—let us go abroad and take a turn on the Mall, or look in at the theatre and see Dick's comedy. 'Tis not a masterpiece of wit; but Dick is a good fellow, though he doth not set the Thames on fire."

Within a month after this day, Mr. Addison's ticket had come up a prodigious prize in the lottery of life. All the town was in an uproar of admiration of his poem, the "Campaign," which Dick Steele was spouting at every coffee-house in Whitehall and Covent Garden. The wits on the other side of Temple Bar saluted him at once as the greatest poet the world had seen for ages; the people huzzahed for Marlborough and for Addison, and, more than this, the party in power provided for the meritorious poet, and Mr. Addison got the appointment of Commissioner of Excise, which the famous Mr. Locke vacated, and rose from this place to other dignities and honours; his prosperity from henceforth to the end of his life being scarce ever interrupted. But I doubt whether he was not happier in his garret in the Haymarket, than ever he was in his splendid palace at Kensington; and I believe the fortune that came to him in the shape of the countess his wife, was no better than a shrew and a vixen.

THE FLIGHT OF THE PRINCE

(From Book III, Chapters XII, XIII)

[While Lady Castlewood continues to feel for Henry an emotion not only hopeless but in her own eyes almost guilty, he falls under the fierce fascination of Lady Castlewood's daughter, Beatrix. This girl, of startling beauty, strong and scornful temper and considerable courage and ambition, finds one scheme after another break in her hands. She had been on the eve of marriage with the Duke of Hamilton, when the latter fell in a duel with the same Mohun who had slain her father. Her last enterprise was to become an active Jacobite and assist the secret landing of James the Pretender. Into this Henry Esmond, as an ardent lover, throws himself also; but the pages that follow will show how much hope there was in James and how much disinterestedness in Beatrix. Esmond marries Lady Castlewood and retires to America.

It is worthy of remark that though Thackeray's Prince is a very typical Stuart, he is not any Stuart that ever lived. The real James III was not gay, Frenchified and amorous, but on the contrary dull, pious and rather sulky. But as Thackeray often said, fiction is more important than history.]

At noon, on the 30th of July, a message came to the Prince's friends that the Committee of Council was sitting at Kensington Palace, their Graces of Ormond and Shrewsbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the three Secretaries of State, being there assembled. In an hour afterwards, hurried news was brought that the two great Whig Dukes, Argyle and Somerset, had broke into the Council Chamber without a summons, and taken their seat at table. After holding a debate there, the whole party proceeded to the chamber of the Queen, who was lying in great weakness, but still sensible, and the Lords recommended his Grace of Shrewsbury as the fittest person to take the vacant place of Lord Treasurer; her Majesty gave him the staff, as all know. "And now," writ my messenger from Court, "*now or never is the time.*"

Now or never was the time indeed. In spite of the Whig Dukes, our side had still the majority in the

Council, and Esmond, to whom the message had been brought (the personage at Court not being aware that the Prince had quitted his lodging in Kensington Square), and Esmond's gallant young aide-de-camp, Frank Castlewood, putting on sword and uniform, took a brief leave of their dear lady, who embraced and blessed them both, and went to her chamber to pray for the issue of the great event which was then pending.

Castlewood sped to the barrack to give warning to the captain of the Guard there; and then went to the "King's Arms" tavern at Kensington, where our friends were assembled, having come by parties of twos and threes, riding or in coaches, and were got together in the upper chamber, fifty-three of them; their servants, who had been instructed to bring arms likewise, being below in the garden of the tavern, where they were served with drink. Out of this garden is a little door that leads into the road of the Palace, and through this it was arranged that masters and servants were to march; when that signal was given, and that Personage appeared, for whom all were waiting. There was in our company the famous officer next in command to the Captain-General of the Forces, his Grace the Duke of Ormond, who was within at the Council. There were with him two more lieutenant-generals, nine major-generals and brigadiers, seven colonels, eleven peers of Parliament, and twenty-one members of the House of Commons. The Guard was with us within and without the Palace: the Queen was with us; the Council (save the two Whig Dukes, that must have succumbed); the day was our own, and with a beating heart Esmond walked rapidly to the Mall of Kensington, where he had parted with the Prince on the night before. For three nights the Colonel had not been to bed: the last had been passed, summoning the Prince's friends together, of whom the great majority had no sort of inkling of the transaction pending until they were told that he was actually on the spot, and were summoned to strike the blow. The night before and after the altercation with the Prince, my gentleman, having suspicions of his

Royal Highness, and fearing lest he should be minded to give us the slip, and fly off after his fugitive beauty, had spent, if the truth must be told, at the "Greyhound" tavern, over against my Lady Castlewood's house in Kensington Square, with an eye on the door, lest the Prince should escape from it. The night before that he had passed in his boots at the "Crown" at Hounslow, where he must watch forsooth all night, in order to get one moment's glimpse of Beatrix in the morning. And fate had decreed that he was to have a fourth night's ride and wakefulness before his business was ended.

He ran to the curate's house in Kensington Mall, and asked for Mr. Bates, the name the Prince went by. The curate's wife said Mr. Bates had gone abroad very early in the morning in his boots, saying he was going to the Bishop of Rochester's house at Chelsey. But the Bishop had been at Kensington himself two hours ago to seek for Mr. Bates, and had returned in his coach to his own house, when he heard that the gentleman was gone thither to seek him.

This absence was most unpropitious, for an hour's delay might cost a kingdom; Esmond had nothing for it but to hasten to the "King's Arms," and tell the gentlemen there assembled that Mr. George (as we called the Prince there) was not at home, but that Esmond would go fetch him; and taking a General's coach that happened to be there, Esmond drove across the country to Chelsey, to the Bishop's house there.

The porter said two gentlemen were with his lordship, and Esmond ran past this sentry up to the locked door of the Bishop's study, at which he rattled, and was admitted presently. Of the Bishop's guests one was a brother prelate, and the other the Abbé G——.

"Where is Mr. George?" says Mr. Esmond; "now is the time." The Bishop looked scared: "I went to his lodging," he said, "and they told me he was come hither. I returned as quick as coach would carry me; and he hath not been here."

The Colonel burst out with an oath; that was all he could say to their reverences; ran down the stairs again,

and bidding the coachman, an old friend and fellow-campaigner, drive as if he was charging the French with his master at Wynendael—they were back at Kensington in half-an-hour.

Again Esmond went to the curate's house. Mr. Bates had not returned. The Colonel had to go with this blank errand to the gentlemen at the "King's Arms," that were grown very impatient by this time.

Out of the window of the tavern, and looking over the garden wall, you can see the green before Kensington Palace, the Palace gate (round which the Ministers' coaches were standing), and the barrack building. As we were looking out from this window in gloomy discourse, we heard presently trumpets blowing, and some of us ran to the window of the front-room, looking into the High Street of Kensington, and saw a regiment of Horse coming.

"It's Ormond's Guards," says one.

"No, by God, it's Argyle's old regiment!" says my General, clapping down his crutch.

It was, indeed, Argyle's regiment that was brought from Westminster, and that took the place of the regiment at Kensington on which we could rely.

"Oh, Harry!" says one of the Generals there present, "you were born under an unlucky star; I begin to think that there's no Mr. George, nor Mr. Dragon either. 'Tis not the peerage I care for, for our name is so ancient and famous, that merely to be called Lord Lydiard would do me no good; but 'tis the chance you promised me of fighting Marlborough."

As we were talking, Castlewood entered the room with a disturbed air.

"What news, Frank?" says the Colonel. "Is Mr. George coming at last?"

"Damn him, look here!" says Castlewood, holding out a paper. "I found it in the book—the what you call it, 'Eikum Basilicum,'—that villain Martin put it there—he said his young mistress bade him. It was directed to me, but it was meant for him, I know, and I broke the seal and read it."

The whole assembly of officers seemed to swim away before Esmond's eyes as he read the paper; all that was written on it was:—"Beatrix Esmond is sent away to prison, to Castlewood, where she will pray for happier days."

"Can you guess where he is?" says Castlewood.

"Yes," says Colonel Esmond. He knew full well, Frank knew full well: our instinct told whither that traitor had fled.

He had courage to turn to the company and say, "Gentlemen, I fear very much that Mr. George will not be here to-day; something hath happened—and—and—I very much fear some accident may befall him, which must keep him out of the way. Having had your noon's draught, you had best pay the reckoning and go home; there can be no game where there is no one to play it."

Some of the gentlemen went away without a word, others called to pay their duty to her Majesty and ask for her health. The little army disappeared into the darkness out of which it had been called; there had been no writings, no paper to implicate any man. Some few officers and Members of Parliament had been invited over-night to breakfast at the "King's Arms," at Kensington; and they had called for their bill and gone home.

* * * * *

"Does my mistress know of this?" Esmond asked of Frank, as they walked along.

"My mother found the letter in the book, on the toilet-table. She had writ it ere she had left home," Frank said. "Mother met her on the stairs, with her hand upon the door, trying to enter, and never left her after that till she went away. He did not think of looking at it there, nor had Martin the chance of telling him. I believe the poor devil meant no harm, though I half killed him; he thought 'twas to Beatrix's brother he was bringing the letter."

Frank never said a word of reproach to me for having brought the villain amongst us. As we knocked at the

door I said, "When will the horses be ready?" Frank pointed with his cane, they were turning the street that moment.

We went up and bade adieu to our mistress; she was in a dreadful state of agitation by this time, and that Bishop was with her whose company she was so fond of.

"Did you tell him, my lord," says Esmond, "that Beatrix was at Castlewood?" The Bishop blushed and stammered: "Well," says he, "I . . ."

"You served the villain right," broke out Mr. Esmond, "and he has lost a crown by what you told him."

My mistress turned quite white: "Henry, Henry," says she, "do not kill him."

"It may not be too late," says Esmond; "he may not have gone to Castlewood; pray God, it is not too late." The Bishop was breaking out with some *banale* phrases about loyalty, and the sacredness of the Sovereign's person; but Esmond sternly bade him hold his tongue, burn all papers, and take care of Lady Castlewood; and in five minutes he and Frank were in the saddle, John Lockwood behind them, riding towards Castlewood at a rapid pace.

We were just got to Alton, when who should meet us but old Lockwood, the porter from Castlewood, John's father, walking by the side of the Hexton flying-coach, who slept the night at Alton. Lockwood said his young mistress had arrived at home on Wednesday night, and this morning, Friday, had despatched him with a packet for my lady at Kensington, saying the letter was of great importance.

We took the freedom to break it, while Lockwood stared with wonder, and cried out his "Lord bless me's," and "Who'd a thought it's," at the sight of his young lord, whom he had not seen these seven years.

The packet from Beatrix contained no news of importance at all. It was written in a jocular strain, affecting to make light of her captivity. She asked whether she might have leave to visit Mrs. Tusher, or to walk beyond the court and the garden wall. She gave news of the peacocks, and a fawn she had there. She

bade her mother send her certain gowns and smocks by old Lockwood; she sent her duty to a certain Person, if certain other persons permitted her to take such a freedom; how that, as she was not able to play cards with him, she hoped he would read good books, such as Dr. Atterbury's sermons and *Eikon Basiliké*: she was going to read good books; she thought her pretty mamma would like to know she was not crying her eyes out.

"Who is in the house besides you, Lockwood?" says the Colonel.

"There be the laundry-maid, and the kitchen-maid, Madam Beatrix's maid, the man from London, and that be all; and he sleepeth in my lodge away from the maids," says old Lockwood.

Esmond scribbled a line with a pencil on the note, giving it to the old man, and bidding him go on to his lady. We knew why Beatrix had been so dutiful on a sudden, and why she spoke of *Eikon Basiliké*. She writ this letter to put the Prince on the scent, and the porter out of the way.

"We have a fine moonlight night for riding on," says Esmond; "Frank, we may reach Castlewood in time yet." All the way along they made inquiries at the post-houses, when a tall young gentleman in a gray suit, with a light brown periwig, just the colour of my lord's, had been seen to pass. He had set off at six that morning, and we at three in the afternoon. He rode almost as quickly as we had done; he was seven hours ahead of us still when we reached the last stage.

We rode over Castlewood Downs before the breaking of dawn. We passed the very spot where the car was upset fourteen years since, and Mohun lay. The village was not up yet, nor the forge lighted, as we rode through it, passing by the elms, where the rooks were still roosting, and by the church, and over the bridge. We got off our horses at the bridge and walked up to the gate.

"If she is safe," says Frank, trembling, and his honest eyes filling with tears, "a silver statue to Our Lady!" He was going to rattle at the great iron knocker on the

oak gate; but Esmond stopped his kinsman's hand. He had his own fears, his own hopes, his own despairs and griefs, too; but he spoke not a word of these to his companion, or showed any signs of emotion.

He went and tapped at the little window at the porter's lodge, gently, but repeatedly, until the man came to the bars.

"Who's there?" says he, looking out; it was the servant from Kensington.

"My Lord Castlewood and Colonel Esmond," we said, from below. "Open the gate and let us in without any noise."

"My Lord Castlewood?" says the other; "my lord's here, and in bed."

"Open, d—n you!" says Castlewood, with a curse.

"I shall open to no one," says the man, shutting the glass window, as Frank drew a pistol. He would have fired at the porter, but Esmond again held his hand.

"There are more ways than one," says he, "of entering such a great house as this." Frank grumbled that the west gate was half a mile round. "But I know of a way that's not a hundred yards off," says Mr. Esmond; and leading his kinsman close along the wall, and by the shrubs, which had now grown thick on what had been an old moat about the house, they came to the buttress, at the side of which the little window was, which was Father Holt's private door. Esmond climbed up to this easily, broke a pane that had been mended, and touched the spring inside, and the two gentlemen passed in that way, treading as lightly as they could: and so going through the passage into the court, over which the dawn was now reddening, and where the fountain plashed in the silence.

They sped instantly to the porter's lodge, where the fellow had not fastened his door that led into the court; and pistol in hand came upon the terrified wretch, and bade him be silent. Then they asked him (Esmond's head reeled, and he almost fell as he spoke) when Lord Castlewood had arrived? He said on the previous evening, about eight of the clock.—"And what then?'—

His lordship supped with his sister.—"Did the man wait?" Yes, he and my lady's maid both waited: the other servants made the supper; and there was no wine, and they could give his lordship but milk, at which he grumbled; and—and Madam Beatrix kept Miss Lucy always in the room with her. And there being a bed across the court in the Chaplain's room, she had arranged my lord was to sleep there. Madam Beatrix had come downstairs laughing with the maids, and had locked herself in, and my lord had stood for a while talking to her through the door, and she laughing at him. And then he paced the court a while, and she came again to the upper window; and my lord implored her to come down and walk in the room; but she would not, and laughed at him again, and shut the window; and so my lord, uttering what seemed curses, but in a foreign language, went to the Chaplain's room to bed.

"Was this all?"—"All," the man swore upon his honour; all as he hoped to be saved.—"Stop, there was one thing more. My lord, on arriving, and once or twice during supper, did kiss his sister, as was natural, and she kissed him." At this Esmond ground his teeth with rage, and well nigh throttled the amazed miscreant who was speaking, whereas Castlewood, seizing hold of his cousin's hand, burst into a great fit of laughter.

"If it amuses thee," says Esmond in French, "that your sister should be exchanging of kisses with a stranger, I fear poor Beatrix will give thee plenty of sport."—Esmond darkly thought, how Hamilton, Ashburnham, had before been masters of those roses that the young Prince's lips were now feeding on. He sickened at that notion. Her cheek was desecrated, her beauty tarnished; shame and honour stood between it and him. The love was dead within him; had she a crown to bring him with her love, he felt that both would degrade him.

But this wrath against Beatrix did not lessen the angry feelings of the Colonel against the man who had been the occasion if not the cause of the evil. Frank sat down on a stone bench in the courtyard, and fairly

fell asleep, while Esmond paced up and down the court, debating what should ensue. What mattered how much or how little had passed between the Prince and the poor faithless girl? They were arrived in time perhaps to rescue her person, but not her mind; had she not instigated the young Prince to come to her, suborned servants, dismissed others, so that she might communicate with him? The treacherous heart within her had surrendered, though the place was safe; and it was to win this that he had given a life's struggle and devotion; this, that she was ready to give away for the bribe of a coronet or a wink of the Prince's eye.

When he had thought his thoughts out he shook up poor Frank from his sleep, who rose yawning, and said he had been dreaming of Clotilda. "You must back me," says Esmond, "in what I am going to do. I have been thinking that yonder scoundrel may have been instructed to tell that story, and that the whole of it may be a lie; if it be, we shall find it out from the gentleman who is asleep yonder. See if the door leading to my lady's rooms" (so we called the rooms at the north-west angle of the house), "see if the door is barred as he saith." We tried; it was, indeed, as the lacquey had said, closed within.

"It may have been opened and shut afterwards," says poor Esmond; "the foundress of our family let our ancestor in in that way."

"What will you do, Harry, if—if what that fellow saith should turn out untrue?" The young man looked scared and frightened into his kinsman's face; I daresay it wore no very pleasant expression.

"Let us first go see whether the two stories agree," says Esmond; and went in at the passage and opened the door into what had been his own chamber now for well nigh five-and-twenty years. A candle was still burning, and the Prince asleep dressed on the bed—Esmond did not care for making a noise. The Prince started up in his bed, seeing two men in his chamber: "Qui est là?" says he, and took a pistol from under his pillow.

"It is the Marquis of Esmond," says the Colonel,

"come to welcome his Majesty to his house of Castlewood, and to report of what hath happened in London. Pursuant to the King's orders, I passed the night before last, after leaving his Majesty, in waiting upon the friends of the King. It is a pity that his Majesty's desire to see the country and to visit our poor house should have caused the King to quit London without notice yesterday, when the opportunity happened which in all human probability may not occur again; and had the King not chosen to ride to Castlewood, the Prince of Wales might have slept at St. James's."

"'Sdeath! gentlemen," says the Prince, starting off his bed, whereon he was lying in his clothes, "the Doctor was with me yesterday morning, and after watching by my sister all night, told me I might not hope to see the Queen."

"It would have been otherwise," says Esmond with another bow; "as, by this time, the Queen may be dead in spite of the Doctor. The Council was met, a new Treasurer was appointed, the troops were devoted to the King's cause; and fifty loyal gentlemen of the greatest names of this kingdom were assembled to accompany the Prince of Wales, who might have been the acknowledged heir of the throne, or the possessor of it by this time, had your Majesty not chosen to taken the air. We were ready; there was only one person that failed us, your Majesty's gracious——"

"Morbleu, Monsieur, you give me too much Majesty," said the Prince, who had now risen up and seemed to be looking to one of us to help him to his coat. But neither stirred.

"We shall take care," says Esmond, "not much oftener to offend in that particular."

"What mean you, my lord?" says the Prince, and muttered something about a *guet-à-pens*, which Esmond caught up.

"The snare, sir," said he, "was not of our laying; it is not we that invited you. We came to avenge, and not to compass the dishonour of our family."

"Dishonour! Morbleu, there has been no dishonour,"

says the Prince, turning scarlet, "only a little harmless playing."

"That was meant to end seriously."

"I swear," the Prince broke out impetuously, "upon the honour of a gentleman, my lords——"

"That we arrived in time. No wrong hath been done, Frank," says Colonel Esmond, turning round to young Castlewood, who stood at the door as the talk was going on. "See! here is a paper whereon his Majesty hath deigned to commence some verses in honour, or dishonour of Beatrix. Here is 'Madame' and 'Flamme,' 'Cruelle' and 'Rebelle,' and 'Amour' and 'Jour,' in the Royal writing and spelling. Had the Gracious lover been happy, he had not passed his time in sighing." In fact, and actually as he was speaking, Esmond cast his eyes down towards the table, and saw a paper on which my young Prince had been scrawling a madrigal, that was to finish his charmer on the morrow.

"Sir," says the Prince, burning with rage (he had assumed his Royal coat unassisted by this time), "did I come here to receive insults?"

"To confer them, may it please your Majesty," says the Colonel, with a very low bow, "and the gentlemen of our family are come to thank you."

"*Malédiction!*" says the young man, tears starting into his eyes with helpless rage and mortification. "What will you with me, gentlemen?"

"If your Majesty will please to enter the next apartment," says Esmond, preserving his grave tone, "I have some papers there which I would gladly submit to you, and by your permission I will lead the way;" and, taking the taper up, and backing before the Prince with very great ceremony, Mr. Esmond passed into the little Chaplain's room, through which we had just entered into the house:—"Please to set a chair for his Majesty, Frank," says the Colonel to his companion, who wondered almost as much at this scene, and was as much puzzled by it, as the other actor in it. Then going to the crypt over the mantel-piece, the Colonel opened it, and drew thence the papers which so long had lain there.

"Here, may it please your Majesty," says he, "is the Patent of Marquis sent over by your Royal Father at St. Germains to Viscount Castlewood, my father: here is the witnessed certificate of my father's marriage to my mother, and of my birth and christening; I was christened of that religion of which your sainted sire gave all through life so shining an example. These are my titles, dear Frank, and this what I do with them: here go Baptism and Marriage, and here the Marquisate and the August Sign Manual, with which your predecessor was pleased to honour our race." And as Esmond spoke he set the papers burning in the brazier. "You will please, sir, to remember," he continued, "that our family hath ruined itself by fidelity to yours: that my grandfather spent his estate, and gave his blood and his son to die for your service; that my dear lord's grandfather (for lord you are now, Frank, by right and title too) died for the same cause; that my poor kinswoman, my father's second wife, after giving away her honour to your wicked perjured race, sent all her wealth to the King; and got in return that precious title that lies in ashes, and this inestimable yard of blue riband. I lay this at your feet and stamp upon it: I draw this sword, and break it and deny you; and, had you completed the wrong you designed us, by heaven I would have driven it though your heart, and no more pardoned you than your father pardoned Monmouth. Frank will do the same, won't you, cousin?"

Frank, who had been looking on with a stupid air at the papers, as they flamed in the old brazier, took out his sword and broke it, holding his head down:—"I go with my cousin," says he, giving Esmond a grasp of the hand. "Marquis or not, by ——, I stand by him any day. I beg your Majesty's pardon for swearing; that is—that is—I'm for the Elector of Hanover. It 's all your Majesty's own fault. The Queen's dead most likely by this time. And you might have been King if you hadn't come dangling after Trix."

"Thus to lose a crown," says the young Prince, starting up, and speaking French in his eager way; "to lose

the loveliest woman in the world; to lose the loyalty of such hearts as yours, is not this, my lords, enough of humiliation?—Marquis, if I go on my knees, will you pardon me?—No, I can't do that, but I can offer you reparation, that of honour, that of gentlemen. Favour me by crossing the sword with mine: yours is broke—see, yonder in the armoire are two;" and the Prince took them out as eager as a boy, and held them towards Esmond:—"Ah! you will? Merci, monsieur, merci!"

Extremely touched by this immense mark of condescension and repentance for wrong done, Colonel Esmond bowed down so low as almost to kiss the gracious young hand that conferred on him such an honour, and took his guard in silence. The swords were no sooner met, than Castlewood knocked up Esmond's with the blade of his own, which he had broke off short at the shell; and the Colonel failing back a step dropped his point with another very low bow, and declared himself perfectly satisfied.

"Eh bien, Vicomte!" says the young Prince, who was a boy, and a French boy, "il ne nous reste qu'une chose à faire:" he placed his sword upon the table, and the fingers of his two hands upon his breast:—"We have one more thing to do," says he; "you do not divine it?" He stretched out his arms:—"*Embrassons nous!*"

The talk was scarce over when Beatrix entered the room:—What came she to seek there? She started and turned pale at the sight of her brother and kinsman, drawn swords, broken sword-blades, and papers yet smouldering in the brazier.

"Charming Beatrix," says the Prince, with a blush which became him very well, "these lords have come a-horseback from London, where my sister lies in a despaired state, and where her successor makes himself desired. Pardon me for my escapade of last evening. I had been so long a prisoner, that I seized the occasion of a promenade on horseback, and my horse naturally bore me towards you. I found you a queen in your little court, where you deigned to entertain me. Present

my homages to your maids of honour. I sighed as you slept, under the window of your chamber, and then retired to seek rest in my own. It was there that these gentlemen agreeably roused me. Yes, milords, for that is a happy day that makes a Prince acquainted, at whatever cost to his vanity, with such a noble heart as that of the Marquis of Esmond. Mademoiselle, may we take your coach to town? I saw it in the hangar, and this poor Marquis must be dropping with sleep."

"Will it please the King to breakfast before he goes?" was all Beatrix could say. The roses had shuddered out of her cheeks; her eyes were glaring; she looked quite old. She came up to Esmond and hissed out a word or two:—"If I did not love you before, cousin," says she, "think how I love you now." If words could stab, no doubt she would have killed Esmond; she looked at him as if she could.

But her keen words gave no wound to Mr. Esmond; his heart was too hard. As he looked at her, he wondered that he could ever have loved her. His love of ten years was over: it fell down dead on the spot, at the Kensington Tavern, where Frank brought him the note out of *Eikon Basiliké*. The Prince blushed and bowed low, as she gazed at him, and quitted the chamber. I have never seen her from that day.

Horses were fetched and put to the chariot presently. My lord rode outside, and as for Esmond he was so tired that he was no sooner in the carriage than he fell asleep, and never woke till night, as the coach came into Alton.

As we drove to the "Bell" Inn comes a mitred coach with our old friend Lockwood beside the coachman. My Lady Castlewood and the Bishop were inside; she gave a little scream when she saw us. The two coaches entered the inn almost together; the landlord and people coming out with lights to welcome the visitors.

We in our coach sprang out of it, as soon as ever we saw the dear lady, and above all, the Doctor in his cassock. What was the news? Was there yet time? Was the Queen alive? These questions were put hur-

riedly, as Boniface stood waiting before his noble guests to bow them up the stair.

"Is she safe?" was what Lady Castlewood whispered in a flutter to Esmond.

"All 's well, thank God," says he, as the fond lady took his hand and kissed it, and called him her preserver and her dear. *She* wasn't thinking of Queens and crowns.

The Bishop's news was reassuring: at least all was not lost; the Queen yet breathed, or was alive when they left London, six hours since. ("It was Lady Castlewood who insisted on coming," the Doctor said.) Argyle had marched up regiments from Portsmouth, and sent abroad for more; the Whigs were on the alert, a pest on them (I am not sure but the Bishop swore as he spoke,) and so too were our people. And all might be saved, if only the Prince could be at London in time. We called for horses, instantly to return to London. We never went up poor crestfallen Boniface's stairs, but into our coaches again. The Prince and his Prime Minister in one, Esmond in the other, with only his dear mistress as a companion.

Castlewood galloped forwards on horseback to gather the Prince's friends and warn them of his coming. We travelled through the night. Esmond discoursing to his mistress of the events of the last twenty-four hours; of Castlewood's ride and his; of the Prince's generous behaviour and their reconciliation. The night seemed short enough; and the starlit hours passed away serenely in that fond company.

So we came along the road; the Bishop's coach heading ours; and with some delays in procuring horses, we got to Hammersmith about four o'clock on Sunday morning, the first of August, and half an hour after, it being then bright day, we rode by my Lady Warwick's house, and so down the street of Kensington.

Early as the hour was, there was a bustle in the street, and many people moving to and fro. Round the gate leading to the Palace, where the guard is, there was especially a great crowd. And the coach ahead of us

stopped, and the Bishop's man got down to know what the concourse meant.

There presently came from out of the gate—Horse Guards with their trumpets, and a company of heralds with their tabards. The trumpets blew, and the herald-at-arms came forward and proclaimed GEORGE, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith. And the people shouted God save the King!

Among the crowd shouting and waving their hats, I caught sight of one sad face, which I had known all my life, and seen under many disguises. It was no other than poor Mr. Holt's, who had slipped over to England to witness the triumph of the good cause; and now beheld its enemies victorious, amidst the acclamations of the English people. The poor fellow had forgot to huzzah or to take his hat off, until his neighbours in the crowd remarked his want of loyalty, and cursed him for a Jesuit in disguise, when he ruefully uncovered and began to cheer. Sure he was the most unlucky of men: he never played a game but he lost it; or engaged in a conspiracy but 'twas certain to end in defeat. I saw him in Flanders after this, whence he went to Rome to the head-quarters of his Order; and actually reappeared among us in America, very old, and busy, and hopeful. I am not sure that he did not assume the hatchet and mocassins there; and, attired in a blanket and war-paint, skulk about a missionary amongst the Indians. He lies buried in our neighbouring province of Maryland now, with a cross over him, and a mound of earth above him; under which that unquiet spirit is for ever at peace.

With the sound of King George's trumpets, all the vain hopes of the weak and foolish young Pretender were blown away; and with that music, too, I may say, the drama of my own life was ended. That happiness, which hath subsequently crowned it, cannot be written in words; 'tis of its nature sacred and secret, and not to be spoken of, though the heart be ever so full of thank-

fulness, save to Heaven and the One Ear alone—to one fond being, the truest and tenderest and purest wife ever man was blessed with. As I think of the immense happiness which was in store for me, and of the depth and intensity of that love which, for so many years, hath blessed me, I own to a transport of wonder and gratitude for such a boon—nay, am thankful to have been endowed with a heart capable of feeling and knowing the immense beauty and value of the gift which God hath bestowed upon me. Sure, love *vincit omnia*; is immeasurably above all ambition, more precious than wealth, more noble than name. He knows not life who knows not that: he hath not felt the highest faculty of the soul who hath not enjoyed it. In the name of my wife I write the completion of hope, and the summit of happiness. To have such a love is the one blessing, in comparison of which all earthly joy is of no value; and to think of her, is to praise God.

THE VIRGINIANS

[*The Virginians* is the last novel of Thackeray from which it is imperative or indeed even possible to make extracts. While the general flow of his writing never failed to be interesting it became more and more diffuse and allusive, and sharp, heroic scenes like those of Beatrix and Becky Sharp almost entirely disappear. *The Virginians* however, contains a rich supply of a certain genial and touching domestic comedy in which Thackeray greatly excelled, of which I have selected this scene of a family at the theatre as the best individual example.

The tale is concerned with two brothers, Esmond Warringtons, the American grandchildren of Henry Esmond, who visit England and the English branch of the Esmonds, descendants of Beatrix's brother. The two Virginian lads find the English Esmonds sufficiently frigid and repellent, but make good friends in the house of Colonel Lambert, a sanctuary of that sound scholarly manhood and domesticity that was the best of the eighteenth century. Lambert has two daughters; one, Hester, falls in love with the sportsman, Harry Warrington, while a happier attachment springs up between Theo and the scholar, George.]

THE TRAGEDY OF "DOUGLAS"

(From Chapters LIX, LX)

With all the passion of his heart Mr. Warrington loved a play. He had never enjoyed this amusement in Virginia, and only once or twice at Quebec, when he visited Canada; and when he came to London, where the two houses were in their full glory, I believe he thought he never could have enough of the delightful entertainment. Anything he liked himself, he naturally wished to share amongst his companions. No wonder that he was eager to take his friends to the theatre, and we may be sure our young country folks were not unwilling. Shall it be

"Drury Lane" or "Covent Garden," ladies? There was Garrick and Shakespeare at "Drury Lane." Well, will it be believed, the ladies wanted to hear the famous new author whose piece was being played at "Covent Garden?"

At this time a star of genius had arisen, and was blazing with quite a dazzling brilliancy. The great Mr. John Home, of Scotland, had produced a tragedy, than which since the days of the ancients, there had been nothing more classic and elegant. What had Mr. Garrick meant by refusing such a masterpiece for his theatre? Say what you will about Shakspeare; in the works of that undoubted great poet (who had begun to grow vastly more popular in England since Monsieur Voltaire attacked him), there were many barbarisms that could not but shock a polite auditory; whereas, Mr. Home, the modern author, knew how to be refined in the very midst of grief and passion; to represent death, not merely as awful, but graceful and pathetic; and never condescended to degrade the majesty of the Tragic Muse by the ludicrous apposition of buffoonery and familiar punning, such as the elder playwright certainly had resort to. Besides, Mr. Home's performance had been admired in quarters so high, and by personages whose taste was known to be as elevated as their rank, that all Britons could not but join in the plaudits for which august hands had given the signal. Such, it was said, was the opinion of the very best company, in the coffee-houses, and amongst the wits about town. Why, the famous Mr. Gray, of Cambridge, said there had not been for a hundred years any dramatic dialogue of such a true style; and as for the poet's native capital of Edinburgh, where the piece was first brought out, it was even said that the triumphant Scots called out from the pit (in their dialect), "Where's Wully Shakspeare noo?"

"I should like to see the man who could beat Willy Shakspeare!" says the General, laughing.

"Mere national prejudice," says Mr. Warrington.

"Beat Shakspeare, indeed!" cries Mrs. Lambert.

"Pooh, pooh! you have cried more over Mr. Sam

Richardson than ever you did over Mr. Shakspeare, Molly!" remarks the General. "I think few women love to read 'Shakspeare:' they say they love it, but they don't."

"Oh, papa!" cry three ladies, throwing up three pair of hands.

"Well, then, why do you all three prefer 'Douglas?' And you, boys, who are such Tories, will you go see a play which is wrote by a Whig Scotchman, who was actually made prisoner at Falkirk?"

"Relictâ non bene parmulâ," says Mr. Jack the scholar.

"Nay—it was relictâ bene parmulâ," cried the General. "It was the Highlanders who flung their targes down, and made fierce work among us red-coats. If they had fought all their fields as well as that, and young Perkin had not turned back from Derby——"

"I know which side would be rebels, and who would be called the Young Pretender," interposed George.

"Hush! you must please to remember my cloth, Mr. Warrington," said the General, with some gravity; "and that the cocade I wear is a black, not a white one! Well, if you will not love Mr. Home for his politics, there is, I think, another reason, George, why you should like him."

"I may have Tory fancies, Mr. Lambert, but I think I know how to love and honour a good Whig," said George, with a bow to the General: "and why should I like this Mr. Home, sir?"

"Because, being a Presbyterian clergyman, he has committed the heinous crime of writing a play, and his brother parsons have barked out an excommunication at him. They took the poor fellow's means of livelihood away from him for his performance; and he would have starved, but that the young Pretender on *our* side of the water has given him a pension."

"If he has been persecuted by the parsons, there is hope for him," says George, smiling. "And henceforth I declare myself ready to hear his sermons."

"Mrs. Woffington is divine in it, though not generally

famous in tragedy. Barry is drawing tears from all eyes; and Garrick is wild at having refused the piece. Girls, you must bring each half-a-dozen handkerchiefs! As for mamma, I cannot trust her; and she positively must be left at home."

But mamma persisted she would go; and, if need were to weep, she would sit and cry her eyes out in a corner. They all went to Covent Garden then; the most of the party duly prepared to see one of the masterpieces of the age and drama. Could they not all speak long pages of Congreve; had they not wept and kindled over Otway and Rowe? O ye past literary glories, that were to be eternal, how long have you been dead? Who knows much more now than where your graves are? Poor neglected Muse of the bygone theatre! She pipes for us, and we will not dance; she tears her hair, and we will not weep. And the Immortals of our time, how soon shall they be dead and buried, think you? How many will survive? How long shall it be ere Nox et Domus Plutonia shall overtake them?

So away went the pleased party to Covent Garden to see the tragedy of the immortal John Home. The ladies and the General were conveyed in a glass coach, and found the young men in waiting to receive them at the theatre door. Hence they elbowed their way through a crowd of torch-boys, and a whole regiment of footmen. Little Hetty fell to Harry's arm in this expedition, and the blushing Miss Theo was handed to the box by Mr. George. Gumbo had kept the places until his masters arrived, when he retired, with many bows, to take his own seat in the footman's gallery. They had good places in a front box, and there was luckily a pillar behind which mamma could weep in comfort. And opposite them they had the honour to see the august hope of the empire, his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, with the Princess Dowager his mother, whom the people greeted with loyal, but not very enthusiastic plaudits. That handsome man standing behind his Royal Highness was my Lord Bute, the Prince's Groom of the Stole, the patron of the poet whose performance

they had come to see, and over whose work the Royal party had already wept more than once.

How can we help it, if during the course of the performance Mr. Lambert would make his jokes and mar the solemnity of the scene? At first, as the reader of the tragedy well knows, the characters are occupied in making a number of explanations. Lady Randolph explains how it is that she is so melancholy. Married to Lord Randolph somewhat late in life, she owns, and his lordship perceives, that a dead lover yet occupies all her heart, and her husband is fain to put up with this dismal, second-hand regard, which is all that my lady can bestow. Hence, an invasion of Scotland by the Danes is rather a cause of excitement than disgust to my lord, who rushes to meet the foe, and forget the dreariness of his domestic circumstances. Welcome, Vikings and Norsemen! Blow, northern blasts, the invaders' keels to Scotland's shore! Randolph and other heroes will be on the beach to give the foemen a welcome! His lordship has no sooner disappeared behind the trees of the forest, but Lady Randolph begins to explain to her confidante the circumstances of her early life. The fact was, she had made a private marriage, and what would the confidante say, if, in early youth, she, Lady Randolph, had lost a husband? In the cold bosom of the earth was lodged the husband of her youth, and in some cavern of the ocean lies her child and his!

Up to this the General behaved with as great gravity as any of his young companions to the play; but when Lady Randolph proceeded to say, "Alas! Hereditary evil was the cause of my misfortunes," he nudged George Warrington, and looked so droll, that the young man burst out laughing.

The magic of the scene was destroyed after that. These two gentlemen went on cracking jokes during the whole of the subsequent performance, to their own amusement, but the indignation of their company, and perhaps of the people in the adjacent boxes. Young Douglas in those days, used to wear a white satin "shape" slashed at the legs and body, and when Mr.

Barry appeared in his droll costume, the General vowed it was the exact dress of the Highlanders in the late war. The Chevalier's Guard, he declared, had all white satin slashed breeches, and red boots—"only they left them at home, my dear," adds this wag. Not one pennyworth of sublimity would he or George allow henceforth to Mr. Home's performance. As for Harry, he sat in very deep meditation over the scene; and when Mrs. Lambert offered him a penny for his thoughts, he said, "That he thought Young Norval, Douglas, What-d'ye-call-'im, the fellow in white satin—who looked as old as his mother—was very lucky to be able to distinguish himself so soon. I wish I could get a chance, Aunt Lambert," says he, drumming on his hat; on which mamma sighed, and Theo, smiling, said, "we must wait, and perhaps the Danes will land."

"How do you mean?" asked simple Harry.

"Oh, the Danes always land, pour qui sçait attendre!" says kind Theo, who had hold of her sister's little hand, and, I daresay, felt its pressure.

She did not behave unkindly—that was not in Miss Theo's nature—but somewhat coldly to Mr. George, on whom she turned her back, addressing remarks, from time to time, to Harry. In spite of the gentlemen's scorn, the women chose to be affected. A mother and son, meeting in love and parting in tears, will always awaken emotion in female hearts.

"Look, Papa! there is an answer to all your jokes!" says Theo, pointing towards the stage.

At a part of the dialogue between Lady Randolph and her son, one of the grenadiers on guard on each side of the stage, as the custom of those days was, could not restrain his tears, and was visibly weeping before the side-box.

"You are right, my dear," says papa.

"Didn't I tell you she always is?" interposes Hetty.

"Yonder sentry is a better critic than we are, and a touch of nature masters us all."

"Tamen usque recurrit!" cries the young student from college.

George felt abashed somehow, and interested too. He had been sneering, and Theo sympathizing. Her kindness was better—nay, wiser—than his scepticism, perhaps. Nevertheless, when, at the beginning of the fifth act of the play, young Douglas, drawing his sword and looking up at the gallery, bawled out——

> "Ye glorious stars! high heaven's resplendent host!
> To whom I oft have of my lot complained,
> Hear and record my soul's unaltered wish:
> Living or dead, let me but be renowned!
> May Heaven inspire some fierce gigantic Dane
> To give a bold defiance to our host!
> Before he speaks it out, I will accept,—
> Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die!"

The gods, to whom Mr. Barry appealed, saluted this heroic wish with immense applause, and the General clapped his hands prodigiously. His daughter was rather disconcerted.

"This Douglas is not only brave, but he is modest!" says papa.

"I own I think he need not have asked for a gigantic Dane," says Theo, smiling, as Lady Randolph entered in the midst of the gallery thunder.

When the applause had subsided, Lady Randolph is made to say——

> "My son, I heard a voice!"

"I think she *did* hear a voice!" cries papa. "Why, the fellow was bellowing like a bull of Bashan." And the General would scarcely behave himself from thenceforth to the end of the performance. He said he was heartily glad that the young gentleman was put to death behind the scenes. When Lady Randolph's friend described how her mistress had "flown like lightning up the hill, and plunged herself into the empty air," Mr. Lambert said he was delighted to be rid of her. "And as for that story of her early marriage," says he, "I have my very strongest doubts about it."

"Nonsense, Martin! Look, children! their Royal Highnesses are moving."

The tragedy over, the Princess Dowager and the Prince were, in fact, retiring; though, I daresay, the latter, who was always fond of a farce, would have been far better pleased with that which followed, than he had been with Mr. Home's dreary tragic masterpiece.

* * * * *

When the performances were concluded, our friends took coach for Mr. Warrington's lodging, where the Virginians had provided an elegant supper. Mr. Warrington was eager to treat them in the handsomest manner, and the General and his wife accepted the invitation of the two bachelors, pleased to think that they could give their young friends pleasure. General and Mrs. Lambert, their son from college, their two blooming daughters, and Mr. Spencer of the Temple, a new friend whom George had met at the coffee-house, formed the party, and partook with cheerfulness of the landlady's fare. The order of their sitting I have not been able exactly to ascertain; but, somehow, Miss Theo had a place next to the chickens and Mr. George Warrington, whilst Miss Hetty and a ham divided the attentions of Mr. Harry. Mrs. Lambert *must* have been on George's right hand, so that we have but to settle the three places of the General, his son, and the Templar.

Mr. Spencer had been at the other theatre, where, on a former day, he had actually introduced George to the green-room. The conversation about the play was resumed, and some of the party persisted in being delighted with it.

"As for what our gentlemen say, sir," cries Mrs. Lambert to Mr. Spencer, "you must not believe a word of it. 'Tis a delightful piece, and my husband and Mr. George behaved as ill as possible."

"We laughed in the wrong place, and when we ought to have cried," the General owned, "that's the truth."

"You caused all the people in the boxes about us to look round and cry, 'Hush!' You made the pit-folks say, 'Silence in the boxes, yonder!' Such behaviour I never knew, and quite blushed for you, Mr. Lambert!"

"Mamma thought it was a tragedy, and we thought it was a piece of fun," says the General. "George and I behaved perfectly well, didn't we, Theo?"

"Not when I was looking your way, Papa!" Theo replies. At which the General asks, "was there ever such a saucy baggage seen?"

"You know, sir, I didn't speak till I was bid," Theo continues, modestly. "I own I was very much moved by the play, and the beauty and acting of Mrs. Woffington. I was sorry that the poor mother should find her child, and lose him. I am sorry, too, Papa, if I oughtn't to have been sorry!" adds the young lady, with a smile.

"Women are not so clever as men, you know, Theo," cries Hetty from her end of the table, with a sly look at Harry. "The next time we go to the play, please, brother Jack, pinch us when we ought to cry, or give us a nudge when it is right to laugh."

"I wish we could have had the fight," said General Lambert—"the fight between little Norval and the gigantic Norwegian—that would have been rare sport: and you should write, Jack, and suggest it to Mr. Rich, the manager."

"I have not seen that: but I saw Slack and Broughton at Marybone Gardens!" says Harry, gravely; and wondered if he had said something witty, as all the company laughed so? "It would require no giant," he added, "to knock over yonder little fellow in the red boots. I, for one, could throw him over my shoulder."

"Mr. Garrick is a little man. But there are times when he looks a giant," says Mr. Spencer. "How grand he was in Macbeth, Mr. Warrington! How awful that dagger-scene was! You should have seen our host, ladies! I presented Mr. Warrington, in the green-room, to Mr. Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard, and Lady Macbeth did him the honour to take a pinch out of his box."

"Did the wife of the Thane of Cawdor sneeze?" asked the General, in an awful voice.

"She thanked Mr. Warrington, in tones so hollow and tragic, that he started back, and must have upset some of his rappee, for Macbeth sneezed thrice."

"Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth!" cries the General.

"And the great philosopher who was standing by,—Mr. Johnson, says, 'You must mind, Davy, lest thy sneeze should awaken Duncan!" who, by the way, was talking with the three witches as they sat against the wall."

"What! Have you been behind the scenes at the play? Oh, I would give worlds to go behind the scenes!" cries Theo.

"And see the ropes pulled, and smell the tallow-candles, and look at the pasteboard gold, and the tinsel jewels, and the painted old women, Theo? No. Do not look too close," says the sceptical young host, demurely drinking a glass of hock. "You were angry with your papa and me."

"Nay, George!" cries the girl.

"Nay? I say, yes! You were angry with us because we laughed when you were disposed to be crying. If I may speak for you, sir, as well as myself," says George (with a bow to his guest, General Lambert), "I think we were not inclined to weep, like the ladies, because we stood behind the author's scenes of the play, as it were. Looking close up to the young hero, we saw how much of him was rant and tinsel; and as for the pale, tragical mother, that her pallor was white chalk, and her grief her pocket-handkerchief. Own now, Theo, you thought me very unfeeling?"

"If you find it out, sir, without my owning it,—what is the good of my confessing?" says Theo.

"Suppose I were to die," goes on George, "and you saw Harry in grief, you would be seeing a genuine affliction, a real tragedy; you would grieve too. But you wouldn't be affected if you saw the undertaker in weepers and a black cloak!"

"Indeed, but I should, sir!" says Mrs. Lambert; "and so, I promise you, would any daughter of mine."

"Perhaps we might find weepers of our own, Mr. Warrington," says Theo, "in such a case."

"Would you?" cries George, and his cheeks and

Theo's simultaneously flush up with red; I suppose because they both saw Hetty's bright young eyes watching them.

"The elder writers understood but little of the pathetic," remarked Mr. Spencer, the Temple wit.

"What do you think of Sophocles and Antigone?" calls out Mr. John Lambert.

"Faith, our wits trouble themselves little about *him*, unless an Oxford gentleman comes to remind us of him! I did not mean to go back further than Mr. Shakspeare, who, as you will all agree, does not understand the elegant and pathetic as well as the moderns. Has he ever approached Belvidera, or Monimia, or Jane Shore; or can you find in his comic female characters the elegance of Congreve?" and the Templar offered snuff to the right and left.

"I think Mr. Spencer himself must have tried his hand?" asks some one.

"Many gentlemen of leisure have. Mr. Garrick, I own, has had a piece of mine and returned it."

"And I confess that I have four acts of a play in one of my boxes," says George.

"I'll be bound to say it's as good as any of 'em," whispers Harry to his neighbour.

"Is it a tragedy or a comedy?" asks Mrs. Lambert.

"Oh, a tragedy, and two or three dreadful murders at least!" George replies.

"Let us play it, and let the audience look to their eyes! Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant," says the General.

"The tragedy, the tragedy! Go and fetch the tragedy this moment, Gumbo!" calls Mrs. Lambert to the black. Gumbo makes a low bow and says "Tragedy? yes, madam."

"In the great cowskin trunk, Gumbo," George says, gravely.

Gumbo bows and says, "Yes, sir," with still superior gravity.

"But my tragedy is at the bottom of I don't know how much linen, packages, books, and boots, Hetty."

"Never mind, let us have it, and fling the linen out of window!" cries Miss Hetty.

"And the great cowskin trunk is at our agent's at Bristol: so Gumbo must get post-horses, and we can keep it up till he returns the day after to-morrow," says George.

The ladies groaned a comical "Oh!" and papa, perhaps, more seriously said: "Let us be thankful for the escape. Let us be thinking of going home too. Our young gentlemen have treated us nobly, and we will all drink a parting bumper to Madam Esmond Warrington of Castlewood, in Virginia. Suppose, boys, you were to find a tall, handsome stepfather when you got home? Ladies as old as she have been known to marry before now."

"To Madam Esmond Warrington, my old schoolfellow!" cries Mrs. Lambert. "I shall write and tell her what a pretty supper her sons have given us: and, Mr. George, I won't say how ill you behaved at the play!" And, with this last toast, the company took leave; the General's coach and servant, with a flambeau, being in waiting to carry his family home.

THE DEATH OF BEATRIX ESMOND.

(From Chapter LXXXIII)

[There is in *The Virginians* only one touch of that dramatic quality which really permits of separate scenes; that touch is the presence in the tale of the terrible old age of Beatrix Esmond. She has been famous and infamous and yet a failure; the wife of a dubious foreign baron and a discarded mistress at Court. She has nothing left but her cards and her deadly tongue; yet she shows a kind of bitter tenderness to the young Virginians, the grandchildren of the man who once loved her so long. In her last moments she softens a little more to Henry Esmond than he ever saw her soften in life.]

The reigning Countess of Castlewood was just as easy and affable with her old aunt, as with other folks great

and small. "What *air* you all about, scraping and bowing to that old woman, I can't tell, noways!" her ladyship would say. "She a fine lady! Nonsense! She ain't no more fine than any other lady: and I guess I'm as good as any of 'em with their high heels and their grand airs! She a beauty once! Take away her wig, and her rouge, and her teeth; and what becomes of your beauty, I'd like to know? Guess you'd put it all in a band-box, and there would be nothing left but a shrivelled old woman!" And indeed the little homilist only spoke too truly. All beauty must at last come to this complexion; and decay, either under ground or on the tree. Here was old age, I fear, without reverence. Here were grey hairs, that were hidden, or painted. The world was still here, and she tottering on it, and clinging to it with her crutch. For fourscore years she had moved on it, and eaten of the tree, forbidden and permitted. She had had beauty, pleasure, flattery: but what secret rages, disappointments, defeats, humiliations! what thorns under the roses! what stinging bees in the fruit! "You are not a beauty, my dear," she would say to my wife: "and may thank your stars that you are not." (If she contradicted herself in her talk, I suppose the rest of us occasionally do the like.) "Don't tell me that your husband is pleased with your face, and you want no one else's admiration! We all do. Every woman would rather be beautiful than be anything else in the world—ever so rich, or ever so good, or have all the gifts of the fairies! Look at that picture, though I know 'tis but a bad one, and that stupid vapouring Kneller could not paint my eyes, nor my air, nor my complexion. What a shape I had then—and look at me now, and this wrinkled old neck! Why have we such a short time of our beauty? I remember Mademoiselle de l'Enclos at a much greater age than mine, quite fresh and well conserved. We can't hide our ages. They are wrote in Mr. Collins's books for us. I was born in the last year of King James's reign. I am not old yet. I am but seventy-six. But what a wreck, my dear: and isn't it cruel that our time should be so short?"

Here my wife has to state the incontrovertible proposition, that the time of all of us is short here below."

"Ha!" cries the Baroness. "Did not Adam live near a thousand years, and was not Eve beautiful all the time? I used to perplex Mr. Tusher with that—poor creature! What have we done since, that our lives are so much lessened, I say?"

"Has your life been so happy that you would prolong it ever so much more?" asks the Baroness's auditor. "Have you, who love wit, never read Dean Swift's famous description of deathless people in *Gulliver*? My papa and my husband say 'tis one of the finest and most awful sermons ever wrote. It were better not to live at all, than to live without love; and I'm sure," says my wife, putting her handkerchief to her eyes, "should anything happen to my dearest George, I would wish to go to heaven that moment."

"Who loves me in heaven? I am quite alone, child—that is why I had rather stay here," says the Baroness, in a frightened and rather piteous tone. "You are kind to me, God bless your sweet face! Though I scold, and have a frightful temper, my servants will do anything to make me comfortable, and get up at any hour of the night, and never say a cross word in answer. I like my cards still. Indeed, life would be a blank without 'em. Almost everything is gone except that. I can't eat my dinner now, since I lost those last two teeth. Everything goes away from us in old age. But I still have my cards—thank heaven, I still have my cards!" And here she would begin to doze: waking up, however, if my wife stirred or rose, and imagining that Theo was about to leave her. "Don't go away, I can't bear to be alone. I don't want you to talk. But I like to see your face, my dear! It is much pleasanter than that horrid old Brett's, that I have had scowling about my bed-room these ever so long years."

"Well, Baroness! still at your cribbage?" (We may fancy a noble Countess interrupting a game at cards between Theo and Aunt Bernstein.) "Me and my Lord Esmond have come to see you! Go and shake hands

with grand-aunt, Esmond! and tell her ladyship that your lordship's a good boy!"

"My lordship's a good boy," says the child. (Madam Theo used to act these scenes for me in a very lively way.)

"And if he is, I guess he don't take after his father," shrieks out Lady Castlewood. She chose to fancy that Aunt Bernstein was deaf, and always bawled at the old lady.

"Your ladyship chose my nephew for better or for worse," says Aunt Bernstein, who was now always very much flurried in the presence of the young Countess.

"But he is a precious deal worse than ever I thought he was. I am speaking of your pa, Ezzy. If it wasn't for your mother, my son, Lord knows what would become of you! We are a-going to see his little Royal Highness. Sorry to see your ladyship not looking quite so well to-day. We can't always remain young: and la! how we *do* change as we grow old! Go up and kiss that lady, Ezzy. She has got a little boy, too. Why, bless us! have you got the child downstairs?" Indeed, Master Miles was down below, for special reasons accompanying his mother on her visits to Aunt Bernstein sometimes; and our aunt desired the mother's company so much, that she was actually fain to put up with the child. "So you have got the child here? Oh, you slyboots!" says the Countess. "Guess you come after the old lady's money! La bless you! Don't look so frightened. She can't hear a single word I say. Come, Ezzy. Good-by, Aunt!" And my lady Countess rustles out of the room.

Did Aunt Bernstein hear her or not? Where was the wit for which the old lady had been long famous? and was that fire put out, as well as the brilliancy of her eyes? With other people she was still ready enough, and unsparing of her sarcasms. When the Dowager of Castlewood and Lady Fanny visited her (these exalted ladies treated my wife with perfect indifference and charming good breeding)—the Baroness, in their society, was stately, easy, and even commanding. She would

mischievously caress Mrs. Warrington before them; in her absence, vaunt my wife's good breeding; say that her nephew had made a foolish match, perhaps, but that I certainly had taken a charming wife. "In a word, I praise you so to them, my dear," says she, "that I think they would like to tear your eyes out." But, before the little American, 'tis certain that she was uneasy and trembled. She was so afraid, that she actually did not dare to deny her the door; and, the Countess's back turned, did not even abuse her. However much they might dislike her, my ladies did not tear out Theo's eyes. Once they drove to our cottage at Lambeth, where my wife happened to be sitting at the open window, holding her child on her knee, and in full view of her visitors. A gigantic footman strutted through our little garden, and delivered their ladyships' visiting tickets at our door. Their hatred hurt us no more than their visit pleased us. When next we had the loan of our friend the Brewer's carriage Mrs. Warrington drove to Kensington, and Gumbo handed over to the giant our cards in return for those which his noble mistresses had bestowed on us.

The Baroness had a coach, but seldom thought of giving it to us: and would let Theo and her maid and baby start from Clarges Street in the rain, with a faint excuse that she was afraid to ask her coachman to take his horses out. But, twice on her return home, my wife was frightened by rude fellows on the other side of Westminster Bridge; and I fairly told my aunt that I should forbid Mrs. Warrington to go to her, unless she could be brought home in safety; so grumbling Jehu had to drive his horses through the darkness. He grumbled at my shillings: he did not know how few I had. Our poverty wore a pretty decent face. My relatives never thought of relieving it, nor I of complaining before them. I don't know how Sampson got a windfall of guineas; but, I remember, he brought me six once; and they were more welcome than any money I ever had in my life. He had been looking into Mr. Miles's crib, as the child lay asleep; and, when the parson went

away, I found the money in the baby's little rosy hand. Yes, Love is best of all I have many such benefactions registered in my heart—precious welcome fountains springing up in desert places, kind, friendly lights cheering our despondency and gloom.

This worthy divine was willing enough to give as much of his company as she chose to Madame de Bernstein, whether for cards or theology. Having known her ladyship for many years now, Sampson could see, and averred to us, that she was breaking fast; and as he spoke of her evidently increasing infirmities, and of the probability of their fatal termination, Mr. S. would discourse to us in a very feeling manner of the necessity for preparing for a future world; of the vanities of this, and of the hope that in another there might be happiness for all repentant sinners.

"I have been a sinner for one," says the Chaplain, bowing his head, "God knoweth, and I pray Him to pardon me. I fear, sir, your aunt, the lady Baroness, is not in such a state of mind as will fit her very well for the change which is imminent. I am but a poor weak wretch, and no prisoner in Newgate could confess that more humbly and heartily. Once or twice of late, I have sought to speak on this matter with her ladyship, but she has received me very roughly. 'Parson,' says she, 'if you come for cards, 'tis mighty well, but I will thank you to spare me your sermons.' What can I do, sir? I have called more than once of late, and Mr. Case hath told me his lady was unable to see me." In fact Madame Bernstein told my wife whom she never refused, as I said, that the poor Chaplain's *ton* was unendurable, and as for his theology, "Haven't I been a Bishop's wife?" says she, "and do I want this creature to teach me?"

The old lady was as impatient of doctors as of divines; pretending that my wife was ailing, and that it was more convenient for our good Doctor Heberden to visit her in Clarges Street than to travel all the way to our Lambeth lodgings, we got Dr. H. to see Theo at our aunt's house, and prayed him if possible to offer his advice to the Baroness: we made Mrs. Brett,

her woman, describe her ailments, and the doctor confirmed our opinion that they were most serious, and might speedily end. She would rally briskly enough of some evenings, and entertain a little company; but of late she scarcely went abroad at all. A somnolence, which we had remarked in her, was attributable in part to opiates which she was in the habit of taking; and she used these narcotics to smother habitual pain. One night, as we two sat with her (Mr. Miles was weaned by this time, and his mother could leave him to the charge of our faithful Molly), she fell asleep over her cards. We hushed the servants who came to lay out the supper-table (she would always have this luxurious, nor could any injunction of ours or the Doctor's teach her abstinence), and we sat a while as we had often done before, waiting in silence till she should arouse from her doze.

When she awoke, she looked fixedly at me for a while, fumbled with the cards, and dropped them again in her lap, and said, "Henry, have I been long asleep?" I thought at first that it was for my brother she mistook me; but she went on quickly, and with eyes fixed as upon some very far distant object, and said, "My dear, 'tis of no use, I am not good enough for you. I love cards, and play, and court; and oh, Harry, you don't know all!" Here her voice changed, and she flung her head up. "His father married Anne Hyde, and sure the Esmond blood is as good as any that's not royal. Mamma, you must please to treat me with more respect. Vos sermons me fatiguent; entendez-vous?—faites place à mon Altesse Royale: mesdames, me connaissez-vous? je suis la ——" Here she broke out into frightful hysterical shrieks and laughter, and as we ran up to her, alarmed, "Oui, Henri," she says, "il a juré de m'épouser, et les princes tiennent parole—n'est-ce pas? O oui! ils tiennent parole; si non, tu le tueras, cousin; tu le—ah! que je suis folle!" And the pitiful shrieks and laughter recommenced. Ere her frightened people had come up to her summons, the poor thing had passed out of this mood into another; but always

labouring under the same delusion—that I was the Henry of past times, who had loved her and had been forsaken by her, whose bones were lying far away by the banks of the Potomac.

My wife and the women put the poor lady to bed as I ran myself for medical aid. She rambled, still talking wildly, through the night, with her nurses and the surgeon sitting by her. Then she fell into a sleep, brought on by more opiate. When she awoke, her mind did not actually wander; but her speech was changed, and one arm and side were paralysed.

'Tis needless to relate the progress and termination of her malady, or watch that expiring flame of life as it gasps and flickers. Her senses would remain with her for a while (and then she was never satisfied unless Theo was by her bedside), or again her mind would wander, and the poor decrepit creature, lying upon her bed, would imagine herself young again, and speak incoherently of the scenes and incidents of her early days. Then she would address me as Henry again, and call upon me to revenge some insult or slight, of which (whatever my suspicions might be) the only record lay in her insane memory. "They have always been so," she would murmur: "they never loved man or woman but they forsook them. Je me vengerai, O oui, je me vengerai! I know them all: I know them all: and I will go to my Lord Stair with the list. Don't tell me! His religion can't be the right one. I will go back to my mother's, though she does not love me. She never did. Why don't you, mother? Is it because I am too wicked? Ah! pitié, pitié. O mon père! I will make my confession" —and here the unhappy paralysed lady made as if she would move in her bed.

Let us draw the curtain round it. I think with awe still of those rapid words, uttered in the shadow of the canopy, as my pallid wife sits by, her Prayer-book on her knee; as the attendants move to and fro noiselessly; as the clock ticks without, and strikes the fleeting hours; as the sun falls upon the Kneller picture of Beatrix in her beauty, with the blushing cheeks, the smiling lips,

the waving auburn tresses, and the eyes which seem to look towards the dim figure moaning in the bed. I could not for a while understand why our aunt's attendants were so anxious that we should quit it. But towards evening, a servant stole in, and whispered her woman; and then Brett, looking rather disturbed, begged us to go downstairs, as the—as the Doctor was come to visit the Baroness. I did not tell my wife, at the time, who "the Doctor" was; but as the gentleman slid by us, and passed up stairs, I saw at once that he was a Catholic ecclesiastic. When Theo next saw our poor lady, she was speechless; she never recognized any one about her, and so passed unconsciously out of life. During her illness her relatives had called assiduously enough, though she would see none of them save us. But when she was gone, and we descended to the lower rooms after all was over, we found Castlewood with his white face, and my lady from Kensington, and Mr. Will, already assembled in the parlour. They looked greedily at us as we appeared. They were hungry for the prey.

When our aunt's will was opened, we found it was dated five years back, and everything she had was left to her dear nephew, Henry Esmond Warrington, of Castlewood in Virginia, "in affectionate love and remembrance of the name which he bore."

ON THUNDER AND SMALL BEER

[The essay on *Thunder and Small Beer* was put as preface to the second edition of *The Kickleburys on the Rhine* and is an answer to the *Times*' criticism on that book. *The Kickleburys on the Rhine* is a better book than the *Times* made out; but is not nearly good enough to have such a preface. The essay is inserted here as the only example which it is convenient to give of a certain easy energy which belonged to Thackeray in his rare moments of controversy. The more he is really angry, the more he becomes explanatory and ironical. This aspect of him is so rarely remembered that the essay in question has been thought worthy of inclusion merely to remind the present generation that he possessed this power in dealing with his own.]

Any reader who may have a fancy to purchase a copy of this present edition of the *History of the Kickleburys Abroad*, had best be warned in time, that the *Times* newspaper does not approve of the work, and has but a bad opinion both of the author and his readers. Nothing can be fairer than this statement: if you happen to take up the poor little volume at a railroad station, and read this sentence, lay the book down, and buy something else. You are warned. What more can the author say? If after this you *will* buy,—amen! pay your money, take your book, and fall to. Between ourselves, honest reader, it is no very strong potation which the present purveyor offers to you. It will not trouble your head much in the drinking. It was intended for that sort of negus which is offered at Christmas parties; and of which ladies and children may partake with refreshment and cheerfulness. Last year I tried a brew which was old, bitter, and strong; and scarce any one would drink it. This year we send round a milder tap, and it is liked by customers: though the critics (who like strong ale, the rogues!)

turn up their noses. In heaven's name, Mr. Smith, serve round the liquor to the gentlefolks. Pray, dear madam, another glass; it is Christmas time, it will do you no harm. It is not intended to keep long, this sort of drink. (Come, froth up, Mr. Publisher, and pass quickly round!) And as for the professional gentlemen, we must get a stronger sort for *them* some day.

The *Times*' gentleman (a very difficult gent to please) is the loudest and noisiest of all, and has made more hideous faces over the refreshment offered to him than any other critic. There is no use shirking this statement! when a man has been abused in the *Times*, he can't hide it, any more than he could hide the knowledge of his having been committed to prison by Mr. Henry, or publicly caned in Pall Mall. You see it in your friends' eyes when they meet you. They know it. They have chuckled over it to a man. They whisper about it at the club, and look over the paper at you. My next-door neighbour came to see me this morning, and I saw by his face that he had the whole story pat. "Hem!" says he, "well, I *have* heard of it; and the fact is, they were talking about you at dinner last night, and mentioning that the *Times* had—ahem!—'walked into you.'"

"My good M——" I say—and M—— will corroborate, if need be, the statement I make here—"here is the *Times*' article, dated January 4th, which states so and so, and here is a letter from the publisher, likewise dated January 4th, and which says:

"'My dear Sir,—Having this day sold the last copy of the first edition (of *x* thousand) of the *Kickleburys Abroad*, and having orders for more, had we not better proceed to a second edition? and will you permit me to enclose an order on,'" etc. etc.?

Singular coincidence! And if every author who was so abused by a critic had a similar note from a publisher, good Lord! how easily would we take the critic's censure!

"Yes, yes," you say; "it is all very well for a writer to affect to be indifferent to a critique from the *Times*.

You bear it as a boy bears a flogging at school, without crying out; but don't swagger and brag as if you liked it."

Let us have truth before all. I would rather have a good word than a bad one from any person; but if a critic abuses me from a high place, and it is worth my while, I will appeal. If I can show that the judge who is delivering sentence against me, and laying down the law and making a pretence of learning, has no learning and no law, and is neither more nor less than a pompous noodle, who ought not to be heard in any respectable court, I will do so; and then, dear friends, perhaps you will have something to laugh at in this book.

"The Kickleburys Abroad.

"It has been customary, of late years, for the purveyors of amusing literature—the popular authors of the day—to put forth certain opuscules, denominated 'Christmas Books,' with the ostensible intention of swelling the tide of exhilaration, or other expansive emotions, incident upon the exodus of the old and the inauguration of the new year. We have said that their ostensible intention was such, because there is another motive for these productions, locked up (as the popular author deems) in his own breast, but which betrays itself, in the quality of the work, as his principal incentive. Oh! that any muse should be set upon a high stool to cast up accounts and balance a ledger! Yet so it is; and the popular author finds it convenient to fill up the declared deficit, and place himself in a position the more effectually to encounter those liabilities which sternly assert themselves contemporaneously and in contrast with the careless and free-handed tendencies of the season by the emission of Christmas books—a kind of literary *assignats*, representing to the emitter expunged debts, to the receiver an investment of enigmatical value. For the most part bearing the stamp of their origin in the vacuity of the writer's exchequer rather than in the fulness of his genius, they suggest by their feeble flavour the rinsings of a void brain after the more important concoctions of the expired year. Indeed, we should as little think of taking these compositions as examples of the merits of their authors as we should think of measuring the valuable services of Mr. Walker, the postman, or Mr. Bell, the dust-collector, by the copy of verses they leave at our doors as a provocative of the expected annual

gratuity—effusions with which they may fairly be classed for their intrinsic worth no less than their ultimate purport.

"In the Christmas book presently under notice, the author appears (under the thin disguise of Mr. Michael Angelo Titmarsh) in '*propriâ personâ*' as the popular author, the contributor to *Punch*, the remorseless pursuer of unconscious vulgarity and feeble-mindedness, launched upon a tour of relaxation to the Rhine. But though exercising, as is the wont of popular authors in their moments of leisure, a plentiful reserve of those higher qualities to which they are indebted for their fame, his professional instincts are not altogether in abeyance. From the moment his eye lights upon a luckless family group embarked on the same steamer with himself, the sight of his accustomed quarry—vulgarity, imbecility, and affectation—reanimates his relaxed sinews, and, playfully fastening his satiric fangs upon the familiar prey, he dallies with it in mimic ferocity like a satiated mouser.

"Though faintly and carelessly indicated, the characters are those with which the author loves to surround himself. A tuft-hunting county baronet's widow, an inane captain of dragoons, a graceless young baronet, a lady with groundless pretensions to feeble health and poesy, an obsequious nonentity her husband, and a flimsy and artificial young lady, are the personages in whom we are expected to find amusement. Two individuals alone form an exception to the above category, and are offered to the respectful admiration of the reader,—the one, a shadowy serjeant-at-law, Mr. Titmarsh's travelling companion, who escapes with a few side puffs of flattery, which the author struggles not to render ironical, and a mysterious countess, spoken of in a tone of religious reverence, and apparently introduced that we may learn by what delicate discriminations our adoration of rank should be regulated.

"To those who love to hug themselves in a sense of superiority by admeasurement with the most worthless of their species, in their most worthless aspects, the *Kickleburys on the Rhine* will afford an agreeable treat, especially as the purveyor of the feast offers his own moments of human weakness as a modest *entrée* in this banquet of erring mortality. To our own, perhaps unphilosophical, taste the aspirations towards sentimental perfection of another popular author are infinitely preferable to *these sardonic divings after the pearl of truth, whose lustre is eclipsed in the display of the diseased oyster.* Much, in the present instance, perhaps all, the disagreeable effect of his subject is no doubt attributable to the absence of Mr. Thackeray's usual brilliancy of style. A few

flashes, however, occur, such as the description of M. Lenoir's gaming establishment, with the momentous crisis to which it was subjected, and the quaint and imaginative sallies evoked by the whole town of Rougetnoirbourg and its lawful prince. These, with the illustrations, which are spirited enough, redeem the book from an absolute ban. Mr. Thackeray's pencil is more congenial than his pen. He cannot draw his men and women with their skins off, and, therefore, the effigies of his characters are pleasanter to contemplate than the flayed anatomies of the letter-press."

There is the whole article. And the reader will see (in the paragraph preceding that memorable one which winds up with the diseased oyster) that he must be a worthless creature for daring to like the book, as he could only do so from a desire to hug himself in a sense of superiority by admeasurement with the most worthless of his fellow-creatures!

The reader is worthless for liking a book of which all the characters are worthless, except two, which are offered to his respectful admiration; and of these two the author does not respect one, but struggles not to laugh in his face; whilst he apparently speaks of another in a tone of religious reverence, because the lady is a countess, and because he (the author) is a sneak. So reader, author, characters, are rogues all. Be there any honest men left, Hal? About Printing-house Square, mayhap you may light on an honest man, a squeamish man, a proper moral man, a man that shall talk you Latin by the half-column if you will but hear him.

And what a style it is, that great man's! What hoighth of foine language entoirely! How he can discourse you in English for all the world as if it was Latin! For instance, suppose you and I had to announce the important news that some writers published what are called Christmas books; that Christmas books are so called because they are published at Christmas; and that the purpose of the authors is to try and amuse people. Suppose, I say, we had, by the sheer force of intellect, or by other means of observation or information, discovered these great truths, we should have announced them in so many

words. And there it is that the difference lies between a great writer and a poor one; and we may see how an inferior man may fling a chance away. How does my friend of the *Times* put these propositions? "It has been customary," says he, "of late years for the purveyors of amusing literature to put forth certain opuscules, denominated Christmas books, with the ostensible intention of swelling the tide of exhilaration, or other expansive emotions, incident upon the exodus of the old or the inauguration of the new year." That is something like a sentence; not a word scarcely but's in Latin, and the longest and handsomest out of the whole dictionary. That is proper economy—as you see a buck from Holywell Street put every pinchbeck pin, ring, and chain which he possesses about his shirt, hands, and waistcoat, and then go and cut a dash in the Park, or swagger with his order to the theatre. It costs him no more to wear all his ornaments about his distinguished person than to leave them at home. If you can be a swell at a cheap rate, why not? And I protest, for my part, I had no idea what I was really about in writing and submitting my little book for sale, until my friend the critic, looking at the article, and examining it with the eyes of a connoisseur, pronounced that what I had fancied simply to be a book was in fact "an opuscule denominated so-and-so, and ostensibly intended to swell the tide of expansive emotion incident upon the inauguration of the new year." I can hardly believe as much even now—so little do we know what we really are after, until men of genius come and interpret.

And besides the ostensible intention, the reader will perceive that my judge has discovered another latent motive, which I had "locked up in my own breast." The sly rogue! (if we may so speak of the court.) There is no keeping anything from him; and this truth, like the rest, has come out, and is all over England by this time. Oh, that all England, which has bought the judge's charge, would purchase the prisoner's plea in mitigation! "Oh, that any muse should be set on a high stool," says the bench, "to cast up accounts and balance

a ledger! Yet so it is; and the popular author finds it convenient to fill up the declared deficit by the emission of Christmas books—a kind of assignats that bear the stamp of their origin in the vacuity of the writer's exchequer." There is a trope for you! You rascal, you wrote because you wanted money! His lordship has found out what you were at, and that there is a deficit in your till. But he goes on to say that we poor devils are to be pitied in our necessity; and that these compositions are no more to be taken as examples of our merits than the verses which the dustman leaves at his lordship's door, "as a provocative of the expected annual gratuity," are to be considered as measuring his, the scavenger's, valuable services—nevertheless the author's and the scavenger's "effusions may fairly be classed, for their intrinsic worth, no less than their ultimate purport."

Heaven bless his lordship on the bench—What a gentleman-like badinage he has, and what a charming and playful wit always at hand! What a sense he has for a simile, or what Mrs. Malaprop calls an odorous comparison, and how gracefully he conducts it to "its ultimate purport." A gentleman writing a poor little book is a scavenger asking for a Christmas-box!

As I try this small beer which has called down such a deal of thunder, I can't help thinking that it is not Jove who has interfered (the case was scarce worthy of his divine vindictiveness); but the Thunderer's man, Jupiter Jeames, taking his master's place, adopting his manner, and trying to dazzle and roar like his awful employer. That figure of the dustman has hardly been flung from heaven: that "ultimate purport" is a subject which the Immortal would hardly handle. Well, well; let us allow that the book is not worthy of such a polite critic—that the beer is not strong enough for a gentleman who has taste and experience in beer.

That opinion no man can ask his honour to alter; but (the beer being the question), why make unpleasant allusions to the *Gazette*, and hint at the probable bank-

ruptcy of the brewer? Why twit me with my poverty; and what can the *Times*' critic know about the vacuity of my exchequer? Did he ever lend me any money? Does he not himself write for money? (and who would grudge it to such a polite and generous and learned author?) If he finds no disgrace in being paid, why should I? If he has ever been poor, why should he joke at my empty exchequer? Of course such a genius is paid for his work: with such neat logic, such a pure style, such a charming poetical turn of phrase, of course a critic gets money. Why, a man who can say of a Christmas book that "it is an opuscule denominated so-and-so, and ostensibly intended to swell the tide of expansive emotion incident upon the exodus of the old year," must evidently have had immense sums and care expended on his early education, and deserves a splendid return. You can't go into the market, and get a scholarship like *that*, without paying for it: even the flogging that such a writer must have had in early youth (if he was at a public school where the rods were paid for), must have cost his parents a good sum. Where would you find any but an accomplished classical scholar to compare the books of the present (or indeed any other) writer to "sardonic divings after the pearl of truth, whose lustre is eclipsed in the display of the diseased oyster;" mere Billingsgate doesn't turn out oysters like these; they are of the Lucrine lake:—this satirist has pickled his rods in Latin brine. Fancy, not merely a diver, but a sardonic diver: and the expression of his confounded countenance on discovering not only a pearl, but an eclipsed pearl, which was in a diseased oyster! I say it is only by an uncommon and happy combination of taste, genius, and industry, that a man can arrive at uttering such sentiments in such fine language,—that such a man ought to be well paid, as I have no doubt he is, and that he is worthily employed to write literary articles, in large type, in the leading journal of Europe. Don't we want men of eminence and polite learning to sit on the literary bench, and to direct the public opinion?

But when this profound scholar compares me to a

scavenger who leaves a copy of verses at his door and begs for a Christmas-box, I must again cry out and say, "My dear sir, it is true your simile is offensive, but can you make it out? Are you not hasty in your figures and allusions?" If I might give a hint to so consummate a rhetorician, you should be more careful in making your figures figures, and your similes like: for instance, when you talk of a book "swelling the tide of exhilaration incident to the inauguration of the new year," or of a book "bearing the stamp of its origin in vacuity," etc.,—or of a man diving sardonically; or of a pearl eclipsed in the display of a diseased oyster—there are some people who will not apprehend your meaning: some will doubt whether you had a meaning: some even will question your great powers, and say, "Is this man to be a critic in a newspaper, which knows what English, and Latin too, and what sense and scholarship, are?" I don't quarrel with you—I take for granted your wit and learning, your modesty and benevolence—but why scavenger—Jupiter Jeames—why scavenger? A gentleman, whose biography the *Examiner* was fond of quoting before it took its present serious and orthodox turn, was pursued by an outraged wife to the very last stage of his existence with an appeal almost as pathetic—Ah, sir, why scavenger?

How can I be like a dustman that rings for a Christmas-box at your hall-door? I never was there in my life. I never left at your door a copy of verses provocative of an annual gratuity, as your noble honour styles it. Who are you? If you are the man I take you to be, it must have been you who asked the publisher for my book, and not I who sent it in, and begged a gratuity of your worship. You abused me out of the *Times*' window; but if ever your noble honour sent me a gratuity out of your own door, may I never drive another dust-cart. "Provocative of a gratuity!" O splendid swell! How much was it your worship sent out to me by the footman? Every farthing you have paid I will restore to your lordship, and I swear I shall not be a halfpenny the poorer.

As before, and on similar seasons and occasions, I have compared myself to a person following a not dissimilar calling: let me suppose now, for a minute, that I am a writer of a Christmas farce, who sits in the pit, and sees the performance of his own piece. There comes applause, hissing, yawning, laughter, as may be: but the loudest critic of all is our friend the cheap buck, who sits yonder and makes his remarks, that all the audience may hear. "*This* a farce!" says Beau Tibbs: "demmy! it 's the work of a poor devil who writes for money—confound his vulgarity! This a farce! Why isn't it a tragedy, or a comedy, or an epic poem, stap my vitals? This a farce indeed! It 's a feller as sends round his 'at, and appeals to charity. Let 's 'ave our money back again, I say." And he swaggers off;—and you find the fellow came with an author's order.

But if, in spite of Tibbs, our "kyind friends," etc., etc., etc.—if the little farce, which was meant to amuse Christmas (or what my classical friend calls Exodus), is asked for, even up to Twelfth Night,—shall the publisher stop because Tibbs is dissatisfied? Whenever that capitalist calls to get his money back, he may see the letter from the respected publisher, informing the author that all the copies are sold, and that there are demands for a new edition. Up with the curtain, then! Vivat Regina! and no money returned, except the *Times*' "gratuity!"

THE BOOK OF SNOBS

[*The Book of Snobs* has two aspects of importance in Thackeray's career. It is the logical completion of his early criticisms; and it is the illogical beginning of his mature fiction. It is the satire of Titmarsh and Yellowplush in its most scientific and systematic form. It is also the romance of Pendennis and Newcome in its most dim and embryonic form. The present compiler has selected two passages to represent this double quality in *The Book of Snobs*. He has taken one scene from Mr. Snob's visit to Major Ponto as an instance of a passage sufficiently realistic to have occurred in any of the novels afterwards.]

ON SOME COUNTRY SNOBS

(From Chapters XXIV-XXVI)

Clang! At the end of the thirty minutes, dinner-bell number two pealed from the adjacent turret. I hastened downstairs, expecting to find a score of healthy country folks in the drawing-room. There was only one person there; a tall and Roman-nosed lady, glistening over with bugles, in deep mourning. She rose, advanced two steps, made a majestic curtsey, during which all the bugles in her awful head-dress began to twiddle and quiver—and then said, "Mr. Snob, we are very happy to see you at the Evergreens," and heaved a great sigh.

This, then, was Mrs. Major Ponto; to whom, making my very best bow, I replied, that I was very proud to make her acquaintance, as also that of so charming a place as the Evergreens.

Another sigh. "We are distantly related, Mr. Snob," said she, shaking her melancholy head. "Poor dear Lord Rubadub!"

"Oh!" said I; not knowing what the deuce Mrs. Major Ponto meant.

"Major Ponto told me that you were of the Leicestershire Snobs: a very old family, and related to Lord Snobbington, who married Laura Rubadub, who is a cousin of mine, as was her poor dear father, for whom we are mourning. What a seizure! only sixty-three, and apoplexy quite unknown until now in our family! In life we are in death, Mr. Snob. Does Lady Snobbington bear the deprivation well?"

"Why, really, ma'am, I—I don't know," I replied, more and more confused.

As she was speaking I heard a sort of *cloop*, by which well-known sound I was aware that somebody was opening a bottle of wine, and Ponto entered, in a huge white neckcloth, and a rather shabby black suit.

"My love," Mrs. Major Ponto said to her husband, "we were talking of our cousin—poor dear Lord Rubadub. His death has placed some of the first families in England in mourning. Does Lady Rubadub keep the house in Hill Street, do you know?"

I didn't know, but I said, "I believe she does," at a venture; and, looking down to the drawing-room table, saw the inevitable, abominable, maniacal, absurd, disgusting "Peerage" open on the table, interleaved with annotations, and open at the article "Snobbington."

"Dinner is served," says Stripes, flinging open the door; and I gave Mrs. Major Ponto my arm.

* * * * *

Of the dinner to which we now sat down, I am not going to be a severe critic. The mahogany I hold to be inviolable; but this I will say, that I prefer sherry to marsala when I can get it, and the latter was the wine of which I have no doubt I heard the "cloop" just before dinner. Nor was it particularly good of its kind; however, Mrs. Major Ponto did not evidently know the difference, for she called the liquor Amontillado during

the whole of the repast, and drank but half a glass of it, leaving the rest for the Major and his guest.

Stripes was in the livery of the Ponto family—a thought shabby, but gorgeous in the extreme—lots of magnificent worsted lace, and livery buttons of a very notable size. The honest fellow's hands, I remarked, were very large and black; and a fine odour of the stable was wafted about the room as he moved to and fro in his ministration. I should have preferred a clean maid-servant, but the sensations of Londoners are too acute perhaps on these subjects; and a faithful John, after all, *is* more genteel.

From the circumstance of the dinner being composed of pig's-head mock-turtle soup, of pig's-fry and roast ribs of pork, I am led to imagine that one of Ponto's black Hampshires had been sacrificed a short time previous to my visit. It was an excellent and comfortable repast; only there *was* rather a sameness in it, certainly. I made a similar remark the next day.

During the dinner Mrs. Ponto asked me many questions regarding the nobility, my relatives. "When Lady Angelina Skeggs would come out; and if the countess her mamma" (this was said with much archness and he-he-ing) "still wore that extraordinary purple hair-dye?" "Whether my Lord Guttlebury kept, besides his French chef, and an English cordon-bleu for the roasts, an Italian for the confectionery?" "Who attended at Lady Clapperclaw's conversazioni?" and "whether Sir John Champignon's 'Thursday mornings' were pleasant?" "Was it true that Lady Carabas, wanting to pawn her diamonds, found that they were paste, and that the Marquis had disposed of them before-hand?" "How was it that Snuffin, the great tobacco-merchant, broke off the marriage which was on the tapis between him and their second daughter; and was it true that a mulatto lady came over from the Havanna and forbade the match?"

"Upon my word, Madam," I had begun, and was going on to say that I didn't know one word about all these matters which seemed so to interest Mrs. Major

Ponto, when the Major, giving me a tread or stamp with his large foot under the table, said—

"Come, come, Snob my boy, we are all tiled, you know. We *know* you're one of the fashionable people about town: *we* saw your name at Lady Clapperclaw's *soirées*, and the Champignon breakfasts; and as for the Rubadubs, of course, as relations——"

"Oh, of course, I dine there twice a week," I said; and then I remembered that my cousin, Humphry Snob, of the Middle Temple, *is* a great frequenter of genteel societies, and to have seen his name in the *Morning Post* at the tag-end of several party lists. So, taking the hint, I am ashamed to say I indulged Mrs. Major Ponto with a deal of information about the first families in England, such as would astonish those great personages if they knew it. I described to her most accurately the three reigning beauties of last season at Almack's: told her in confidence that his Grace the D—— of W—— was going to be married the day after his Statue was put up; that his Grace the D—— of D—— was also about to lead the fourth daughter of the Archduke Stephen to the hymeneal altar:—and talked to her, in a word, just in the style of Mrs. Gore's last fashionable novel.

Mrs. Major was quite fascinated by this brilliant conversation. She began to trot out scraps of French, just for all the world as they do in the novels; and kissed her hand to me quite graciously, telling me to come soon to caffy, *ung pu de Musick o salong*—with which she tripped off like an elderly fairy.

"Shall I open a bottle of port, or do you ever drink such a thing as Hollands and water?" says Ponto, looking ruefully at me. This was a very different style of thing to what I had been led to expect from him at our smoking-room at the Club: where he swaggers about his horses and his cellar: and slapping me on the shoulder used to say, "Come down to Mangelwurzelshire, Snob my boy, and I'll give you as good a day's shooting and as good a glass of claret as any in the county."—"Well," I said, "I liked Hollands much

better than port, and gin even better than Hollands." This was lucky: it *was* gin; and Stripes brought in hot water on a splendid plated tray.

The jingling of a harp and piano soon announced that Mrs. Ponto's *ung pu de Musick* had commenced, and the smell of the stable again entering the dining-room, in the person of Stripes, summoned us to *caffy* and the little concert. She beckoned me with a winning smile to the sofa, on which she made room for me, and where we could command a fine view of the backs of the young ladies who were performing the musical entertainment. Very broad backs they were too, strictly according to the present mode, for crinoline or its substitutes is not an expensive luxury, and young people in the country can afford to be in the fashion at very trifling charges. Miss Emily Ponto at the piano, and her sister Maria at that somewhat exploded instrument, the harp, were in light blue dresses that looked all flounce, and spread out like Mr. Green's balloon when inflated.

"Brilliant touch Emily has—what a fine arm Maria's is," Mrs. Ponto remarked good-naturedly, pointing out the merits of her daughters, and waving her own arm in such a way as to show that she was not a little satisfied with the beauty of that member. I observed she had about nine bracelets and bangles, consisting of chains and padlocks, the Major's miniature, and a variety of brass serpents, with fiery ruby or tender turquoise eyes, writhing up to her elbow almost, in the most profuse contortions.

"You recognize those polkas? They were played at Devonshire House on the 23rd of July, the day of the grand fête." So I said yes—I knew 'em quite intimately; and began wagging my head as if in acknowledgment of those old friends.

When the performance was concluded, I had the felicity of a presentation and conversation with the two tall and scraggy Miss Pontos; and Miss Wirt, the governess, sat down to entertain us with variations on "Sich a gettin' up Stairs." They were determined to be in the fashion.

For the performance of the "Gettin' up Stairs," I have no other name but that it was a *stunner*. First Miss Wirt, with great deliberation, played the original and beautiful melody, cutting it, as it were, out of the instrument, and firing off each note so loud, clear, and sharp, that I am sure Stripes must have heard it in the stable.

"What a finger!" says Mrs. Ponto; and indeed it *was* a finger, as knotted as a turkey's drumstick, and splaying all over the piano. When she had banged out the tune slowly, she began a different manner of "Gettin' uy Stairs," and did so with a fury and swiftness quite incredible. She spun up stairs; she whirled up stairs; she galloped up stairs; she rattled up stairs; and then having got the tune to the top landing, as it were, she hurled it down again shrieking to the bottom floor, where it sank in a crash as if exhausted by the breathless rapidity of the descent. Then Miss Wirt played the "Gettin' up Stairs" with the most pathetic and ravishing solemnity: plaintive moans and sobs issued from the keys—you wept and trembled as you were gettin' up stairs. Miss Wirt's hands seemed to faint and wail and die in variations: again, and she went up with a savage clang and rush of trumpets, as if Miss Wirt was storming a breach; and although I knew nothing of music, as I sat and listened with my mouth open to this wonderful display, my *caffy* grew cold, and I wondered the windows did not crack and the chandelier start out of the beam at the sound of this earthquake of a piece of music.

"Glorious creature! Isn't she?" said Mrs. Ponto. "Squirtz's favourite pupil—inestimable to have such a creature. Lady Carabas would give her eyes for her! A prodigy of accomplishments! Thank you, Miss Wirt!" —and the young ladies gave a heave and a gasp of admiration—a deep-breathing gushing sound, such as you hear at church when the sermon comes to a full stop.

Miss Wirt put her two great double-knuckled hands round a waist of her two pupils, and said, "My dear children, I hope you will be able to play it soon as well

as your poor little governess. When I lived with the Dunsinanes, it was the dear Duchess's favourite, and Lady Barbara and Lady Jane Macbeth learned it. It was while hearing Jane play that, I remember, that dear Lord Castletoddy first fell in love with her? and though he is but an Irish Peer, with not more than fifteen thousand a year, I persuaded Jane to have him. Do you know Castletoddy, Mr. Snob?—round towers—sweet place—County Mayo. Old Lord Castletoddy (the present Lord was then Lord Inishowan) was a most eccentric old man—they say he was mad. I heard his Royal Highness the poor dear Duke of Sussex—(*such* a man, my dears, but alas! addicted to smoking!)—I heard his Royal Highness say to the Marquis of Anglesea, 'I am sure Castletoddy is mad!' but Inishowan wasn't in marrying my sweet Jane, though the dear child had but her ten thousand pounds *pour tout potage*!"

"Most invaluable person," whispered Mrs. Major Ponto to me. "Has lived in the very highest society;" and I, who have been accustomed to see governesses bullied in the world, was delighted to find this one ruling the roast, and to think that even the majestic Mrs. Ponto bent before her.

As for *my* pipe, so to speak, it went out at once. I hadn't a word to say against a woman who was intimate with every Duchess in the Red Book. She wasn't the rosebud, but she had been near it. She had rubbed shoulders with the great, and about these we talked all the evening incessantly, and about the fashions, and about the Court, until bed-time came.

"And are there Snobs in this Elysium?" I exclaimed, jumping into the lavender-perfumed bed. Ponto's snoring boomed from the neighbouring bed-room in reply.

* * * * *

Something like a Journal of the proceedings at the Evergreens may be interesting to those foreign readers of *Punch* who want to know the customs of an English gentleman's family and household. There 's plenty of

time to keep the Journal. Piano-strumming begins at six o'clock in the morning; it lasts till breakfast, with but a minute's intermission, when the instrument changes hands, and Miss Emily practises in place of her sister Miss Maria.

In fact, the confounded instrument never stops: when the young ladies are at their lessons, Miss Wirt hammers away at those stunning variations, and keeps her magnificent finger in exercise.

I asked this great creature in what other branches of education she instructed her pupils? "The modern languages," says she modestly: "French, German, Spanish, and Italian, Latin and the rudiments of Greek if desired. English of course; the practice of Elocution, Geography, and Astronomy, and the Use of the Globes, Algebra (but only as far as quadratic equations); for a poor ignorant female, you know, Mr. Snob, cannot be expected to know everything. Ancient and Modern History no young woman can be without; and of these I make my beloved pupils *perfect mistresses*. Botany, Geology, and Mineralogy, I consider as amusements. And with these I assure you we manage to pass the days at the Evergreens not unpleasantly."

Only these, thought I—what an education! But I looked in one of Miss Ponto's manuscript song-books and found five faults of French in four words: and in a waggish mood asking Miss Wirt whether Dante Algiery was so called because he was born at Algiers, received a smiling answer in the affirmative, which made me rather doubt about the accuracy of Miss Wirt's knowledge.

When the above little morning occupations are concluded, these unfortunate young women perform what they call Calisthenic Exercises in the garden. I saw them to-day, without any crinoline, pulling the garden-roller.

Dear Mrs. Ponto was in the garden too, and as limp as her daughters; in a faded bandeau of hair, in a

battered bonnet, in a holland pinafore, in pattens, on a broken chair, snipping leaves off a vine. Mrs. Ponto measures many yards about in an evening. Ye heavens! what a guy she is in that skeleton morning-costume!

Besides Stripes, they keep a boy called Thomas or Tummus. Tummus works in the garden or about the pigsty and stable; Thomas wears a page's costume of eruptive buttons.

When anybody calls, and Stripes is out of the way, Tummus flings himself like mad into Thomas's clothes, and comes out metamorphosed like Harlequin in the pantomime. To-day, as Mrs. P. was cutting the grape-vine, as the young ladies were at the roller, down comes Tummus like a roaring whirlwind, with "Missus, Missus, there's company coomin'!" Away skurry the young ladies from the roller, down comes Mrs. P. from the old chair, off flies Tummus to change his clothes, and in an incredibly short space of time Sir John Hawbuck, my Lady Hawbuck, and Master Hugh Hawbuck are introduced into the garden with brazen effrontery by Thomas, who says, "Please Sir Jan and my Lady to walk this year way: *I know* Missus is in the rose-garden."

And there, sure enough, she was!

In a pretty little garden bonnet, with beautiful curling ringlets, with the smartest of aprons and the freshest of pearl-coloured gloves, this amazing woman was in the arms of her dearest Lady Hawbuck. "Dearest Lady Hawbuck, how good of you! Always among my flowers! can't live away from them!"

"Sweets to the sweet! hum—a-ha—haw!" says Sir John Hawbuck, who piques himself on his gallantry, and says nothing without "a-hum—a-ha—a-haw!"

"Whereth yaw pinnafaw!" cries Master Hugh. "*We* thaw you in it, over the wall, didn't we, Pa?"

"Hum—a-ha—a-haw!" burst out Sir John, dreadfully alarmed. "Where's Ponto? Why wasn't he at Quarter Sessions? How are his birds this year, Mrs. Ponto—have those Carabas pheasants done any harm to your wheat? a-hum—a-ha—a-haw!" and all this

while he was making the most ferocious and desperate signals to his youthful heir.

"Well, she *wath* in her pinnafaw, wathn't she, Ma?" says Hugh, quite unabashed; which question Lady Hawbuck turned away with a sudden query regarding her dear darling daughters, and the *enfant terrible* was removed by his father.

"I hope you weren't disturbed by the music?" Ponto says. "My girls, you know, practise four hours a day, you know—must do it, you know—absolutely necessary. As for me, you know I'm an early man, and in my farm every morning at five—no, no laziness for *me*."

The facts are these. Ponto goes to sleep directly after dinner on entering the drawing-room, and wakes up when the ladies leave off practice at ten. From seven till ten, and from ten till five, is a very fair allowance of slumber for a man who says he 's *not* a lazy man. It is my private opinion that when Ponto retires to what is called his "Study," he sleeps too. He locks himself up there daily two hours with the newspaper.

I saw the *Hawbuck* scene out of the Study, which commands the garden. It 's a curious object, that Study. Ponto's library mostly consists of boots. He and Stripes have important interviews here of mornings, when the potatoes are discussed, or the fate of the calf ordained, or sentence passed on the pig, etc. All the Major's bills are docketed on the Study table and displayed like a lawyer's briefs. Here, too, lie displayed his hooks, knives, and other gardening irons, his whistles, and strings of spare buttons. He has a drawer of endless brown paper for parcels, and another containing a prodigious and never-failing supply of string. What a man can want with so many gig-whips I can never conceive. These, and fishing-rods, and landing-nets, and spurs, and boot-trees, and balls for horses, and surgical implements for the same, and favourite pots of shiny blacking, with which he paints his own shoes in the most elegant manner, and buck-skin gloves stretched out on

their trees, and his gorget, sash, and sabre of the Horse Marines, with his boot-hooks underneath in a trophy; and the family medicine-chest, and in a corner the very rod with which he used to whip his son, Wellesley Ponto, when a boy (Wellesley never entered the "Study" but for that awful purpose)—all these with "Mogg's Road Book," the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, and a backgammon board, form the Major's library. Under the trophy there 's a picture of Mrs. Ponto, in a light blue dress and train, and no waist, when she was first married; a fox's brush lies over the frame, and serves to keep the dust off that work of art.

"My library's small," says Ponto, with the most amazing impudence, "but well selected, my boy—well selected. I have been reading the 'History of England' all the morning."

SNOBBIUM GATHERUM

(Chapter XXXII)

[The other aspect of *The Book of Snobs* is its general vein of riotous and rambling irony. This quality, since it pervades the whole book, is much more difficult to exemplify. Upon the whole the essay in answer to the lady inquirers would seem to possess the fullest flavour of this cynical champagne, the very effervescence of incredulity.]

When I see the great effect which these papers are producing on an intelligent public, I have a strong hope that before long we shall have a regular Snob-department in the newspapers, just as we have the Police Courts and the Court News at present. When a flagrant case of bone-crushing or Poor-law abuse occurs in the world, who so eloquent as the *Times* to point it out? When a gross instance of Snobbishness happens, why should not the indignant journalist call the public attention to that delinquency too?

How, for instance, could that wonderful case of the

Earl of Mangelwurzel and his brother be examined in the Snobbish point of view? Let alone the hectoring, the bullying, the vapouring, the bad grammar, the mutual recriminations, lie-givings, challenges, retractions, which abound in the fraternal dispute—put out of the question these points as concerning the individual nobleman and his relative, with whose personal affairs we have nothing to do—and consider how intimately corrupt, how habitually grovelling and mean, how entirely Snobbish, in a word, a whole county must be which can find no better chiefs or leaders than these two gentlemen. "We don't want," the great county of Mangelwurzelshire seems to say, "that a man should be able to write good grammar; or that he should keep a Christian tongue in his head; or that he should have the commonest decency of temper, or even a fair share of good sense, in order to represent us in Parliament. All we require is, that a man should be recommended to us by the Earl of Mangelwurzelshire. And all that we require of the Earl of Mangelwurzelshire is that he should have fifty thousand a year and hunt the country." O you pride of all Snobland! O you crawling, truckling, self-confessed lacqueys and parasites!

But this is growing too savage: don't let us forget our usual amenity, and that tone of playfulness and sentiment with which the beloved reader and writer have pursued their mutual reflections hitherto. Well, Snobbishness pervades the little Social Farce as well as the great State Comedy; and the self-same moral is tacked to either.

There was, for instance, an account in the papers of a young lady who, misled by a fortune-teller, actually went part of the way to India (as far as Bagnigge Wells, I think), in search of a husband who was promised her there. Do you suppose this poor deluded little soul would have left her shop for a man below her in rank, or for anything but a darling of a Captain in epaulets and a red coat? It was her Snobbish sentiment that misled her, and made her vanities a prey to the swindling fortune-teller.

Case 2 was that of Mademoiselle de Saugrenue, "the interesting young Frenchwoman with a profusion of jetty ringlets," who lived for nothing at a boarding-house at Gosport, was then conveyed to Fareham gratis: and being there, and lying on the bed of the good old lady her entertainer, the dear girl took occasion to rip open the mattress, and steal a cash-box, with which she fled to London. How would you account for the prodigious benevolence exercised towards the interesting young French lady? Was it her jetty ringlets or her charming face?—Bah! Do ladies love others for having pretty faces and black hair?—she said *she was a relation of* Lord de Saugrenue: talked of her ladyship her aunt, and of herself as a De Saugrenue. The honest boarding-house people were at her feet at once. Good, honest, simple, lord-loving children of Snobland!

Finally, there was the case of "the Right Honourable Mr. Vernon," at York. The Right Honourable was the son of a nobleman, and practised on an old lady. He procured from her dinners, money, wearing-apparel, spoons, implicit credence, and an entire refit of linen. Then he casts his net over a family of father, mother, and daughters, one of whom he proposed to marry. The father lent him money, the mother made jams and pickles for him, the daughters vied with each other in cooking dinners for the Right Honourable—and what was the end? One day the traitor fled, with a teapot and a basketful of cold victuals. It was the "Right Honourable" which baited the hook which gorged all these greedy, simple Snobs. Would they have been taken in by a commoner? What old lady is there, my dear sir, who would take in you and me, were we ever so ill to do, and comfort us, and clothe us, and give us her money, and her silver forks? Alas and alas! what mortal man that speaks the truth can hope for such a landlady? And yet, all these instances of fond and credulous Snobbishness have occurred in the same week's paper with who knows how many score more.

Just as we had concluded the above remarks comes a

pretty little note sealed with a pretty little butterfly—bearing a northern postmark—and to the following effect:

"19*th November.*

"Mr. Punch,—Taking great interest in your Snob Papers, we are very anxious to know under what class of that respectable fraternity you would designate us.

"We are three sisters, from seventeen to twenty-two. Our father is *honestly and truly* of a very good family (you will say it is Snobbish to mention that, but I wish to state the plain fact); our maternal grandfather was an Earl.[1]

"We *can* afford to take in a stamped edition of *you*, and all Dickens' works as fast as they come out, but we do *not* keep such a thing as a *Peerage* or even a *Baronetage* in the house.

"We live with every comfort, excellent cellar, etc. etc.; but as we cannot well afford a butler, we have a neat table-maid (though our father was a military man, has travelled much, been in the best society, etc.). We *have* a coachman and helper, but we don't put the latter into buttons, nor make them wait at table, like Stripes and Tummus.[2]

"We are just the same to persons with a handle to their name as to those without it. We wear a moderate modicum of crinoline,[3] and are never *limp*[4] in the morning. We have good and abundant dinners on *china* (though we have plate[5]), and just as good when alone as with company.

"Now, my dear *Mr. Punch*, will you *please* give us a short answer in your next number, and I will be *so* much obliged to you. Nobody knows we are writing to you, not even our father; nor will we ever tease you[6] again

[1] The introduction of Grandpapa is, I fear, Snobbish.
[2] That is as you like. I don't object to buttons in moderation.
[3] Quite right. [4] Bless you!
[5] Snobbish; and I doubt whether you ought to dine as well when alone as with company. You will be getting too good dinners.
[6] We like to be teased; but tell Papa.

if you will only give us an answer—just for fun, now do!

"If you get as far as this, which is doubtful, you will probably fling it into the fire. If you do, I cannot help it; but I am of a sanguine disposition, and entertain a lingering hope. At all events, I shall be impatient for next Sunday, for you reach us on that day, and I am ashamed to confess, we *cannot* resist opening you in the carriage driving home from church.[1]—I remain, etc. etc., for myself and sisters.

"Excuse this scrawl, but I always write *headlong*."[2]

"P.S.—You were rather stupid last week, don't you think?[3] We keep no gamekeeper, and yet have always abundant game for friends to shoot, in spite of the poachers. We never write on perfumed paper—in short, I can't help thinking that if you knew us you would not think us Snobs."

To this I reply in the following manner:

"My dear young ladies, I know your post-town: and shall be at church there the Sunday *after* next; when, will you please to wear a tulip or some little trifle in your bonnets, so that I may know you? You will recognize me and my dress—a quiet-looking young fellow, in a white top-coat, a crimson satin neckcloth, light blue trousers, with glossy tipped boots, and an emerald breast-pin. I shall have a black crape round my white hat: and my usual bamboo cane with the richly-gilt knob. I am sorry there will be no time to get up moustaches between now and next week.

"From seventeen to two-and-twenty! Ye Gods! what ages! Dear young creatures, I can see you all three. Seventeen suits me, as nearest my own time of life; but mind, I don't say two-and-twenty is too old. No, no.

[1] O garters and stars! what will Captain Gordon and Exeter Hall say to this?

[2] Dear little enthusiast!

[3] You were never more mistaken, Miss, in your life.

And that pretty, roguish, demure middle one. Peace, peace, thou silly little fluttering heart!

"*You* Snobs, dear young ladies! I will pull any man's nose who says so. There is no harm in being of a good family. You can't help it, poor dears. What's in a name? What is in a handle to it? I confess openly that I should not object to being a Duke myself; and between ourselves you might see a worse leg for a garter.

"*You* Snobs, dear little good-natured things, no!—that is, I hope not—I think not—I won't be too confident—none of us should be—that we are not Snobs. That very confidence savours of arrogance, and to be arrogant is to be a Snob. In all the social gradations from sneak to tyrant, nature has placed a most wondrous and various progeny of Snobs. But are there no kindly natures, no tender hearts, no souls humble, simple, and truth-loving? Ponder well on this question, sweet young ladies. And if you can answer it, as no doubt you can—lucky are you—and lucky the respected Herr Papa, and lucky the three handsome young gentlemen who are about to become each others' brothers-in-law."

GEORGE THE FOURTH

[Thackeray, like every true novelist, probably regarded novels as the most serious things in the world. Nevertheless it must not be forgotten that what he wrote outside fiction was not all fantastic essay or avowedly idle satire. If he did not exactly appear as an historian, he appeared quite positively as a contributor to history. He loved the eighteenth century atmosphere so much that he was almost an eighteenth century writer; if he did not write history, he wrote memoirs—memoirs of the things he could not remember. This book gives so much of Thackeray that is light and fanciful that it would be unfair to leave out what was elaborate. Probably the most elaborate and detailed of these, his contributions to history is the celebrated essay on George IV, in *The Four Georges.*]

In Twiss's amusing *Life of Eldon*, we read how, on the death of the Duke of York, the old Chancellor became possessed of a lock of the defunct Prince's hair; and so careful was he respecting the authenticity of the relic, that Bessy Eldon his wife sat in the room with the young man from Hamlet's, who distributed the ringlet into separate lockets, which each of the Eldon family afterwards wore. You know how, when George IV come to Edinburgh, a better man than he went on board the royal yacht to welcome the King to his kingdom of Scotland, seized a goblet from which his Majesty had just drunk, vowed it should remain for ever as an heir-loom in his family, clapped the precious glass in his pocket, and sat down on it and broke it when he got home. Suppose the good sheriff's prize unbroken now at Abbotsford, should we not smile with something like pity as we beheld it? Suppose one of those lockets of the no-Popery Prince's hair offered for sale at Christie's, *quot libras e duce summo invenies*? how many pounds

would you find for the illustrious Duke? Madame Tussaud has got King George's coronation robes; is there any man now alive who would kiss the hem of that trumpery? He sleeps since thirty years; do not any of you, who remember him, wonder that you once respected and huzza'd and admired him?

To make a portrait of him at first seemed a matter of small difficulty. There is his coat, his star, his wig, his countenance simpering under it: with a slate and a piece of chalk, I could at this very desk perform a recognizable likeness of him. And yet after reading of him in scores of volumes, hunting him through old magazines and newspapers, having him here at a ball, there at a public dinner, there at races and so forth, you find you have nothing—nothing but a coat and a wig and a mask smiling below it—nothing but a great simulacrum. His sire and grandsires were men. One knows what they were like: what they would do in given circumstances: that on occasion they fought and demeaned themselves like tough good soldiers. They had friends whom they liked according to their natures; enemies whom they hated fiercely; passions, and actions, and individualities of their own. The sailor King who came after George was a man: the Duke of York was a man, big, burly, loud, jolly, cursing, courageous. But this George, what was he? I look through all his life, and recognize but a bow and a grin. I try and take him to pieces, and find silk stockings, padding, stays, a coat with frogs and a fur collar, a star and blue ribbon, a pocket-handkerchief prodigiously scented, one of Truefitt's best nutty brown wigs reeking with oil, a set of teeth and a huge black stock, under-waistcoats, more under-waistcoats, and then nothing. I know of no sentiment that he ever distinctly uttered. Documents are published under his name, but people wrote them—private letters, but people spelt them. He put a great George P. or George R. at the bottom of the page and fancied he had written the paper: some bookseller's clerk, some poor author, some *man* did the work; saw to the spelling, cleaned up the slovenly sentences, and

gave the lax maudlin slipslop a sort of consistency. He must have had an individuality: the dancing-master whom he emulated, nay, surpassed—the wig-maker who curled his toupee for him—the tailor who cut his coats, had that. But, about George, one can get at nothing actual. That outside, I am certain, is pad and tailor's work; there may be something behind, but what? We cannot get at the character; no doubt never shall. Will men of the future have nothing better to do than to unswathe and interpret that royal old mummy? I own I once used to think it would be good sport to pursue him, fasten on him, and pull him down. But now I am ashamed to mount and lay good dogs on, to summon a full field, and then to hunt the poor game.

On the 12th August, 1762, the forty-seventh anniversary of the accession of the House of Brunswick to the English throne, all the bells in London pealed in gratulation, and announced that an heir to George III was born. Five days afterwards the King was pleased to pass letters patent under the great seal, creating H.R.H. the Prince of Great Britain, Electoral Prince of Bruswick Lüneburg, Duke of Cornwall and Rothsay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Great Steward of Scotland, Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.

All the people at his birth thronged to see this lovely child; and behind a gilt china-screen railing in St. James's Palace, in a cradle surmounted by the three princely ostrich feathers, the royal infant was laid to delight the eyes of the lieges. Among the earliest instances of homage paid to him, I read that "a curious Indian bow and arrows were sent to the Prince from his father's faithful subjects in New York." He was fond of playing with these toys: an old statesman, orator, and wit of his grandfather's and great-grandfather's time, never tired of his business, still eager in his old age to be well at court, used to play with the little Prince, and pretend to fall down dead when the Prince shot at him with his toy bow and arrows—and get up and fall down dead over and over again—to the increased delight of the

child. So that he was flattered from his cradle upwards; and before his little feet could walk, statesmen and courtiers were busy kissing them.

There is a pretty picture of the royal infant—a beautiful buxom child—asleep in his mother's lap; who turns round and holds a finger to her lip, as if she would bid the courtiers around respect the baby's slumbers. From that day until his decease, sixty-eight years after, I suppose there were more pictures taken of that personage than of any other human being who ever was born and died—in every kind of uniform and every possible court-dress—in long fair hair, with powder, with and without a pig-tail—in every conceivable cocked-hat—in dragoon uniform—in Windsor uniform—in a field-marshal's clothes—in a Scotch kilt and tartans, with dirk and claymore (a stupendous figure)—in a frogged frock-coat with a fur collar and tight breeches and silk stockings—in wigs of every colour, fair, brown and black—in his famous coronation robes finally, with which performance he was so much in love that he distributed copies of the picture to all the courts and British embassies in Europe, and to numberless clubs, town-halls, and private friends. I remember as a young man how almost every dining-room had his portrait.

There is plenty of biographical tattle about the Prince's boyhood. It is told with what astonishing rapidity he learned all languages, ancient and modern; how he rode beautifully, sang charmingly, and played elegantly on the violoncello. That he was beautiful was patent to all eyes. He had a high spirit: and once, when he had had a difference with his father, burst into the royal closet and called out, "Wilkes and liberty for ever!" He was so clever, that he confounded his very governors in learning; and one of them, Lord Bruce, having made a false quantity in quoting Greek, the admirable young Prince instantly corrected him. Lord Bruce could not remain a governor after this humiliation; resigned his office, and, to soothe his feelings, was actually promoted to be an earl! It is the most wonderful reason for promoting a man that ever I heard. Lord Bruce

was made an earl for a blunder in prosody; and Nelson was made a baron for the victory of the Nile.

Lovers of long sums have added up the millions and millions which in the course of his brilliant existence this single Prince consumed. Besides his income of £50,000, £70,000, £100,000, £120,000 a year, we read of three applications to Parliament: debts to the amount of £160,000, of £650,000; besides mysterious foreign loans, whereof he pocketed the proceeds. What did he do for all this money? Why was he to have it? If he had been a manufacturing town, or a populous rural district, or an army of five thousand men, he would not have cost more. He, one solitary stout man, who did not toil, nor spin, nor fight—what had any mortal done that he should be pampered so?

In 1784, when he was twenty-one years of age, Carlton Palace was given to him, and furnished by the nation with as much luxury as could be devised. His pockets were filled with money: he said it was not enough; he flung it out of window: he spent £10,000 a year for the coats on his back. The nation gave him more money, and more, and more. The sum is past counting. He was a prince most lovely to look on, and was christened Prince Florizel on his first appearance in the world. That he was the handsomest prince in the whole world was agreed by men, and alas! by many women.

I suppose he must have been very graceful. There are so many testimonies to the charm of his manner, that we must allow him great elegance and powers of fascination. He, and the King of France's brother, the Count d'Artois, a charming young Prince who danced deliciously on the tight-rope—a poor old tottering exiled King, who asked hospitality of King George's successor, and lived awhile in the palace of Mary Stuart—divided in their youth the title of first gentleman of Europe. We in England of course gave the prize to *our* gentleman. Until George's death the propriety of that award was scarce questioned, or the doubters voted rebels and traitors. Only the other day I was reading in

the reprint of the delightful *Noctes* of Christopher North. The health of THE KING is drunk in large capitals by the loyal Scotsman. You would fancy him a hero, a sage, a statesman, a pattern for kings and men. It was Walter Scott who had that accident with the broken glass I spoke of anon. He was the King's Scottish champion, rallied all Scotland to him, made loyalty the fashion, and laid about him fiercely with his claymore upon all the Prince's enemies. The Brunswicks had no such defenders as those two Jacobite commoners, old Sam Johnson, the Lichfield chapman's son, and Walter Scott, the Edinburgh lawyer's.

Nature and circumstance had done their utmost to prepare the Prince for being spoiled: the dreadful dulness of papa's court, its stupid amusements, its dreary occupations, the maddening humdrum, the stifling sobriety of its routine, would have made a scapegrace of a much less lively prince. All the big princes bolted from that castle of *ennui* where old King George sat, posting up his books and droning over his Handel; and old Queen Charlotte over her snuff and her tambour-frame. Most of the sturdy, gallant sons settled down after sowing their wild oats, and became sober subjects of their father and brother—not ill liked by the nation, which pardons youthful irregularities readily enough, for the sake of pluck, and unaffectedness, and good-humour.

The boy is father of the man. Our Prince signalized his entrance into the world by a feat worthy of his future life. He invented a new shoebuckle. It was an inch long and five inches broad. "It covered almost the whole instep, reaching down to the ground on either side of the foot." A sweet invention! lovely and useful as the Prince on whose foot it sparkled. At his first appearance at a court-ball, we read that "his coat was pink silk, with white cuffs; his waistcoat white silk, embroidered with various-coloured foil, and adorned with a profusion of French paste. And his hat was ornamented with two rows of steel beads, five thousand in number, with a button and loop of the same metal,

and cocked in a new military style." What a Florizel! Do these details seem trivial? They are the grave incidents of his life. His biographers say that when he commenced housekeeping in that splendid new palace of his, the Prince of Wales had some windy projects of encouraging literature, science, and the arts; of having assemblies of literary characters; and societies for the encouragement of geography, astronomy, and botany. Astronomy, geography, and botany! Fiddlesticks! French ballet-dancers, French cooks, horse-jockeys, buffoons, procurers, tailors, boxers, fencing-masters, china, jewel, and gimcrack merchants—these were his real companions. At first he made a pretence of having Burke and Fox and Sheridan for his friends. But how could such men be serious before such an empty scapegrace as this lad? Fox might talk dice with him, and Sheridan wine; but what else had these men of genius in common with their tawdry young host of Carlton House? That fribble the leader of such men as Fox and Burke! That man's opinions about the constitution, the India Bill, justice to the Catholics—about any question graver than the button for a waistcoat or the sauce for a partridge—worth anything! The friendship between the Prince and the Whig chiefs was impossible. They were hypocrites in pretending to respect him, and if he broke the hollow compact between them, who shall blame him? His natural companions were dandies and parasites. He could talk to a tailor or a cook; but, as the equal of great statesmen, to set up a creature, lazy, weak, indolent, besotted, of monstrous vanity, and levity incurable—it is absurd. They thought to use him, and did for awhile; but they must have known how timid he was; how entirely heartless and treacherous, and have expected his desertion. His next set of friends were mere table companions, of whom he grew tired too; then we hear of him with a very few select toadies, mere boys from school or the Guards, whose sprightliness tickled the fancy of the worn-out voluptuary. What matters what friends he had? He dropped all his friends; he never could have real friends. An heir to the

throne has flatterers, adventurers who hang about him, ambitious men who use him; but friendship is denied him.

And women, I suppose, are as false and selfish in their dealings with such a character as men. Shall we take the Leporello part, flourish a catalogue of the conquests of this royal Don Juan, and tell the names of the favourites to whom, one after the other, George Prince flung his pocket-handkerchief? What purpose would it answer to say, how Perdita was pursued, won, deserted, and by whom succeeded? What good in knowing that he did actually marry Mrs. Fitz-Herbert according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church; that her marriage settlements have been seen in London; that the names of the witnesses to her marriage are known? This sort of vice that we are now come to presents no new or fleeting trait of manners. Debauchees, dissolute, heartless, fickle, cowardly, have been ever since the world began. This one had more temptations than most, and so much may be said in extenuation for him.

It was an unlucky thing for this doomed one, and tending to lead him yet farther on the road to the deuce, that, besides being lovely, so that women were fascinated by him; and heir-apparent, so that all the world flattered him; he should have a beautiful voice, which led him directly in the way of drink: and thus all the pleasant devils were coaxing on poor Florizel; desire, and idleness, and vanity, and drunkenness, all clashing their merry cymbals and bidding him come on.

We first hear of his warbling sentimental ditties under the walls of Kew Palace by the moonlight banks of Thames, with Lord Viscount Leporello keeping watch lest the music should be disturbed.

Singing after dinner and supper was the universal fashion of the day. You may fancy all England sounding with choruses, some ribald, some harmless, but all occasioning the consumption of a prodigious deal of fermented liquor.

The jolly Muse her wings to try no frolic flights need take,
But round the bowl would dip and fly, like swallows round a lake,

sang Morris in one of his gallant Anacreontics, to which the Prince many a time joined in chorus, and of which the burden is,—

> And that I think 's a reason fair to drink and fill again.

This delightful boon companion of the Prince's found "a reason fair" to forego filling and drinking, saw the error of his ways, gave up the bowl and chorus, and died retired and religious. The Prince's table no doubt was a very tempting one. The wits came and did their utmost to amuse him. It is wonderful how the spirits rise, the wit brightens, the wine has an aroma, when a great man is at the head of the table. Scott, the loyal cavalier, the king's true liegeman, the very best *raconteur* of his time, poured out with an endless generosity his store of old-world learning, kindness, and humour. Grattan contributed to it his wondrous eloquence, fancy, feeling. Tom Moore perched upon it for awhile, and piped his most exquisite little love-tunes on it, flying away in a twitter of indignation afterwards, and attacking the Prince with bill and claw. In such society, no wonder the sitting was long, and the butler tired of drawing corks. Remember what the usages of the time were, and that William Pitt, coming to the House of Commons after having drunk a bottle of port-wine at his own house, would go into Bellamy's with Dundas, and help finish a couple more.

You peruse volumes after volumes about our Prince, and find some half-dozen stock stories—indeed not many more—common to all the histories. He was good-natured; an indolent, voluptuous prince, not unkindly. One story, the most favourable to him of all, perhaps, is that as Prince Regent he was eager to hear all that could be said in behalf of prisoners condemned to death, and anxious, if possible, to remit the capital sentence. He was kind to his servants. There is a story common to all the biographies, of Molly the housemaid, who, when his household was to be broken up, owing to some reforms which he tried absurdly to practise, was dis-

covered crying as she dusted the chairs because she was to leave a master who had a kind word for all his servants. Another tale is that of a groom of the Prince's being discovered in corn and oat peculations, and dismissed by the personage at the head of the stables; the Prince had word of John's disgrace, remonstrated with him very kindly, generously reinstated him, and bade him promise to sin no more—a promise which John kept. Another story is very fondly told of the Prince as a young man hearing of an officer's family in distress, and how he straightway borrowed six or eight hundred pounds, put his long fair hair under his hat, and so disguised carried the money to the starving family. He sent money, too, to Sheridan on his death-bed, and would have sent more had not death ended the career of that man of genius. Besides these, there are a few pretty speeches, kind and graceful, to persons with whom he was brought in contact. But he turned upon twenty friends. He was fond and familiar with them one day, and he passed them on the next without recognition. He used them, liked them, loved them perhaps in his way, and then separated from them. On Monday he kissed and fondled poor Perdita, and on Tuesday he met her and did not know her. On Wednesday he was very affectionate with that wretched Brummell, and on Thursday forgot him; cheated him even out of a snuff-box which he owed the poor dandy; saw him years afterwards in his downfall and poverty, when the bankrupt Beau sent him another snuff-box with some of the snuff he used to love, as a piteous token of remembrance and submission, and the King took the snuff, and ordered his horses and drove on, and had not the grace to notice his old companion, favourite, rival, enemy, superior. In Wraxall there is some gossip about him. When the charming, beautiful, generous Duchess of Devonshire died—the lovely lady whom he used to call his dearest duchess once, and pretend to admire as all English society admired her—he said "Then we have lost the best bred woman in England." "Then we have lost the kindest heart in England," said noble Charles Fox. On

another occasion, when three noblemen were to receive the Garter, says Wraxall, "A great personage observed that never did three men receive the order in so characteristic a manner. The Duke of A. advanced to the sovereign with a phlegmatic, cold, awkward air like a clown; Lord B. came forward fawning and smiling like a courtier; Lord C. presented himself easy, unembarrassed, like a gentleman!" These are the stories one has to recall about the Prince and King—kindness to a housemaid, generosity to a groom, criticism on a bow. There *are* no better stories about him: they are mean and trivial, and they characterize him. The great war of empires and giants goes on. Day by day victories are won and lost by the brave. Torn, smoky flags and battered eagles are wrenched from the heroic enemy and laid at his feet; and he sits there on his throne and smiles, and gives the guerdon of valour to the conqueror. He! Elliston the actor, when the *Coronation* was performed, in which he took the principal part, used to fancy himself the King, burst into tears, and hiccup a blessing on the people. I believe it is certain about George IV, that he had heard so much of the war, knighted so many people, and worn such a prodigious quantity of marshal's uniforms, cocked-hats, cock's feathers, scarlet and bullion in general, that he actually fancied he had been present in some campaigns, and, under the name of General Brock, led a tremendous charge of the German legion at Waterloo.

He is dead but thirty years, and one asks how a great society could have tolerated him? Would we bear him now? In this quarter of a century, what a silent revolution has been working! how it has separated us from old times and manners! How it has changed men themselves! I can see old gentlemen now among us, of perfect good breeding, of quiet lives, with venerable grey heads, fondling their grandchildren; and look at them, and wonder what they were once. That gentleman of the grand old school, when he was in the 10th Hussars, and dined at the Prince's table, would fall under it night after night. Night after night, that gen-

tleman sat at Brooks's or Raggett's over the dice. If, in the petulance of play or drink, that gentleman spoke a sharp word to his neighbour, he and the other would infallibly go out and try to shoot each other the next morning. That gentleman would drive his friend Richmond the black boxer down to Moulsey, and hold his coat, and shout and swear, and hurrah with delight, whilst the black man was beating Dutch Sam the Jew. That gentleman would take a manly pleasure in pulling his own coat off and thrashing a bargeman in a street row. That gentleman has been in a watch-house. That gentleman, so exquisitely polite with ladies in a drawing-room, so loftily courteous, if he talked now as he used among men in his youth, would swear so as to make your hair stand on end. I met lately a very old German gentleman, who had served in our army at the beginning of the century. Since then he has lived on his own estate, but rarely meeting with an Englishman, whose language—the language of fifty years ago that is—he possesses perfectly. When this highly bred old man began to speak English to me, almost every other word he uttered was an oath: as they used (they swore dreadfully in Flanders) with the Duke of York before Valenciennes, or at Carlton House over the supper and cards. Read Byron's letters. So accustomed is the young man to oaths that he employs them even in writing to his friends, and swears by the post. Read his account of the doings of young men at Cambridge, of the ribald professors, one of whom "could pour out Greek like a drunken Helot," and whose excesses surpassed even those of the young men. Read Matthews' description of the boyish lordling's housekeeping at Newstead, the skull-cup passed round, the monk's dresses from the masquerade warehouse, in which the young scapegraces used to sit until daylight, chanting appropriate songs round their wine. "We come to breakfast at two or three o'clock," Matthews says. "There are gloves and foils for those who like to amuse themselves, or we fire pistols at a mark in the hall, or we worry the wolf." A jolly life truly! The noble young owner of the mansion

writes about such affairs himself in letters to his friend, Mr. John Jackson, the pugilist, in London.

All the Prince's time tells a similar strange story of manners and pleasure. In Wraxall we find the Prime Minister himself, the redoubted William Pitt, engaged in high jinks with personages of no less importance than Lord Thurlow the Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Dundas the Treasurer of the Navy. Wraxall relates how these three statesmen, returning after dinner from Addiscombe, found a turnpike open, and galloped through it without paying the toll. The turnpikeman, fancying they were highwaymen, fired a blunderbuss after them, but missed them; and the poet sang:

> How as Pitt wandered darkling o'er the plain,
> His reason drown'd in Jenkinson's champagne,
> A rustic's hand, but righteous fate withstood,
> Had shed a Premier's for a robber's blood.

Here we have the Treasurer of the Navy, the Lord High Chancellor, and the Prime Minister, all engaged in a most undoubted lark. In Eldon's *Memoirs*, about the very same time, I read that the bar loved wine, as well as the woolsack. Not John Scott himself; he was a good boy always; and though he loved port-wine, loved his business and his duty and his fees a great deal better.

He has a Northern Circuit story of those days, about a party at the house of a certain Lawyer Fawcett, who gave a dinner every year to the counsel.

"On one occasion," related Lord Eldon, "I heard Lee say, 'I cannot leave Fawcett's wine. Mind, Davenport, you will go home immediately after dinner, to read the brief in that cause that we have to conduct to-morrow.'

"'Not I,' said Davenport. 'Leave my dinner and my wine to read a brief! No, no, Lee; that won't do.'

"'Then,' said Lee, 'what is to be done? who else is employed?'

"*Davenport.*—'Oh! young Scott.'

"*Lee.*—'Oh! he must go. Mr. Scott, you must go

home immediately, and make yourself acquainted with that cause, before our consultation this evening.'

"This was very hard upon me; but I did go, and there was an attorney from Cumberland, and one from Northumberland, and I do not know how many other persons. Pretty late, in came Jack Lee, as drunk as he could be.

"'I cannot consult to-night; I must go to bed,' he exclaimed, and away he went. Then came Sir Thomas Davenport.

"'We cannot have a consultation to-night, Mr. Wordsworth' (Wordsworth, I think, was the name; it was a Cumberland name), shouted Davenport. 'Don't you see how drunk Mr. Scott is? it is impossible to consult.' Poor me! who had scarce had any dinner, and lost all my wine—I was so drunk that I could not consult! Well, a verdict was given against us, and it was all owing to Lawyer Fawcett's dinner. We moved for a new trial; and I must say, for the honour of the bar, that those two gentlemen, Jack Lee and Sir Thomas Davenport, paid all the expenses between them of the first trial. It is the only instance I ever knew; but they did. We moved for a new trial (on the ground, I suppose, of the counsel not being in their senses), and it was granted. When it came on, the following year, the judge rose and said,—

"'Gentlemen, did any of you dine with Lawyer Fawcett yesterday? for, if you did, I will not hear this cause till next year.'

"There was great laughter. We gained the cause that time."

On another occasion, at Lancaster, where poor Bozzy must needs be going the Northern Circuit, "we found him," says Mr. Scott, "lying upon the pavement inebriated. We subscribed a guinea at supper for him, and a half-crown for his clerk"—(no doubt there was a large bar, so that Scott's joke did not cost him much), "and sent him, when he waked next morning, a brief, with instructions to move for what we denominated the writ of *quare adhæsit pavimento;* with observations duly calculated to induce him to think that it required great

learning to explain the necessity of granting it, to the judge before whom he was to move." Boswell sent all round the town to attorneys for books that might enable him to distinguish himself — but in vain. He moved, however, for the writ, making the best use he could of the observations in the brief. The judge was perfectly astonished, and the audience amazed. The judge said, "I never heard of such a writ—what can it be that adheres *pavimento?* Are any of you gentlemen at the bar able to explain this?"

The bar laughed. At last one of them said,—

"My lord, Mr. Boswell last night *adhæsit pavimento.* There was no moving him for some time. At last he was carried to bed, and he has been dreaming about himself and the pavement."

The canny old gentleman relishes these jokes. When the Bishop of Lincoln was moving from the deanery of St. Paul's, he says he asked a learned friend of his, by name Will Hay, how he should move some especially fine claret, about which he was anxious.

"Pray, my lord bishop," says Hay, "how much of the wine have you?"

The bishop said six dozen.

"If that is all," Hay answered, "you have but to ask me six times to dinner, and I will carry it all away myself."

There were giants in those days; but this joke about wine is not so fearful as one perpetrated by Orator Thelwall, in the heat of the French Revolution, ten years later, over a frothing pot of porter. He blew the head off, and said, "This is the way I would serve all kings."

Now we come to yet higher personages, and find their doings recorded in the blushing pages of timid little Miss Burney's *Memoirs.* She represents a prince of the blood in quite a royal condition. The loudness, the bigness, boisterousness, creaking boots and rattling oaths of the young princes, appear to have frightened the prim household of Windsor, and set all the teacups twittering on the tray. On the night of a ball and birthday, when one of the pretty, kind princesses was to come

out, it was agreed that her brother, Prince William Henry, should dance the opening minuet with her, and he came to visit the household at their dinner.

"At dinner, Mrs. Schwellenberg presided, attired magnificently; Miss Goldsworthy, Mrs. Stanforth, Messrs. Du Luc and Stanhope, dined with us; and while we were still eating fruit, the Duke of Clarence entered.

"He was just risen from the King's table, and waiting for his equipage to go home and prepare for the ball. To give you an idea of the energy of his Royal Highness's language, I ought to set apart an objection to writing, or rather intimating, certain forcible words, and beg leave to show you in genuine colours a royal sailor.

"We all rose, of course, upon his entrance, and the two gentlemen placed themselves behind their chairs, while the footmen left the room. But he ordered us all to sit down, and called the men back to hand about some wine. He was in exceeding high spirits, and in the utmost good humour. He placed himself at the head of the table, next Mrs. Schwellenberg, and looked remarkably well, gay, and full of sport and mischief; yet clever withal, as well as comical.

"'Well, this is the first day I have ever dined with the King at St. James's on his birthday. Pray, have you all drunk his Majesty's health?'

"'No, your Royal Highness; your Royal Highness might make dem do dat,' said Mrs. Schwellenberg.

"'Oh, by ——, I will! Here, you' (to the footman), 'bring champagne; I'll drink the King's health again, if I die for it. Yes, I have done it pretty well already; so has the King, I promise you! I believe his Majesty was never taken such good care of before; we have kept his spirits up, I promise you; we have enabled him to go through his fatigues; and I should have done more still, but for the ball and Mary;—I have promised to dance with Mary. I must keep sober for Mary.'"

Indefatigable Miss Burney continues for a dozen pages reporting H.R.H.'s conversation, and indicating, with a humour not unworthy of the clever little author of *Evelina*, the increasing state of excitement of the

young sailor Prince, who drank more and more champagne, stopped old Mrs. Schwellenberg's remonstrances by giving the old lady a kiss, and telling her to hold her potato-trap, and who did not "keep sober for Mary." Mary had to find another partner that night, for the royal William Henry could not keep his legs.

Will you have a picture of the amusements of another royal prince? It is the Duke of York, the blundering general, the beloved commander-in-chief of the army, the brother with whom George IV had had many a midnight carouse, and who continued his habits of pleasure almost till death seized his stout body.

In Pückler Muskau's *Letters*, that German Prince describes a bout with H.R.H., who in his best time was such a powerful toper that "six bottles of claret after dinner scarce made a perceptible change in his countenance."

"I remember," says Pückler, "that one evening—indeed, it was past midnight,—he took some of his guests, among whom were the Austrian ambassador, Count Meervelt, Count Beroldingen, and myself, into his beautiful armoury. We tried to swing several Turkish sabres, but none of us had a very firm grasp; whence it happened that the Duke and Meervelt both scratched themselves with a sort of straight Indian sword so as to draw blood. Meervelt then wished to try if the sword cut as well as a Damascus, and attempted to cut through one of the wax candles that stood on the table. The experiment answered so ill, that both the candles, candlesticks and all, fell to the ground and were extinguished. While we were groping in the dark and trying to find the door, the Duke's aide-de-camp stammered out in great agitation, 'By G—, sir, I remember the sword is poisoned!'

"You may conceive the agreeable feelings of the wounded at this intelligence! Happily, on further examination, it appeared that claret, and not poison, was at the bottom of the colonel's exclamation."

And now I have one more story of the bacchanalian sort, in which Clarence and York, and the very highest

personage of the realm, the great Prince Regent, all play parts. The feast took place at the Pavilion at Brighton, and was described to me by a gentleman who was present at the scene. In Gilray's caricatures, and amongst Fox's jolly associates, there figures a great nobleman, the Duke of Norfolk, called Jockey of Norfolk in his time, and celebrated for his table exploits. He had quarrelled with the Prince, like the rest of the Whigs; but a sort of reconciliation had taken place; and now, being a very old man, the Prince invited him to dine and sleep at the Pavilion, and the old Duke drove over from his Castle of Arundel with his famous equipage of gray horses, still remembered in Sussex.

The Prince of Wales had concocted with his royal brothers a notable scheme for making the old man drunk. Every person at table was enjoined to drink wine with the Duke—a challenge which the old toper did not refuse. He soon began to see that there was a conspiracy against him; he drank glass for glass; he overthrew many of the brave. At last the First Gentleman of Europe proposed bumpers of brandy. One of the royal brothers filled a great glass for the Duke. He stood up and tossed off the drink. "Now," says he, "I will have my carriage, and go home." The Prince urged upon him his previous promise to sleep under the roof where he had been so generously entertained. "No," he said; he had had enough of such hospitality. A trap had been set for him; he would leave the place at once and never enter its doors more.

The carriage was called, and came; but, in the half-hour's interval, the liquor had proved too potent for the old man; his host's generous purpose was answered, and the Duke's old gray head lay stupefied on the table. Nevertheless, when his post-chaise was announced, he staggered to it as well as he could, and stumbling in, bade the postillions drive to Arundel. They drove him for half an hour round and round the Pavilion lawn; the poor old man fancied he was going home. When he awoke that morning he was in bed at the Prince's hideous house at Brighton. You may see the place now

for sixpence: they have fiddlers there every day; and sometimes buffoons and mountebanks hire the Riding House and do their tricks and tumbling there. The trees are still there, and the gravel walks round which the poor old sinner was trotted. I can fancy the flushed faces of the royal princes as they support themselves at the portico pillars, and look on at old Norfolk's disgrace; but I can't fancy how the man who perpetrated it continued to be called a gentleman.

From drinking, the pleased Muse now turns to gambling, of which in his youth our Prince was a great practitioner. He was a famous pigeon for the play-men; they lived upon him. Egalité Orleans, it was believed, punished him severely. A noble lord, whom we shall call the Marquis of Steyne, is said to have mulcted him in immense sums. He frequented the clubs, where play was then almost universal; and, as it was known his debts of honour were sacred, whilst he was gambling Jews waited outside to purchase his notes of hand. His transactions on the turf were unlucky as well as discreditable: though I believe he, and his jockey, and his horse, Escape, were all innocent in that affair which created so much scandal.

Arthur's, Almack's, Bootle's, and White's were the chief clubs of the young men of fashion. There was play at all, and decayed noblemen and broken-down senators fleeced the unwary there. In Selwyn's *Letters* we find Carlisle, Devonshire, Coventry, Queensberry, all undergoing the probation. Charles Fox, a dreadful gambler, was cheated in very late times—lost £200,000 at play. Gibbon tells of his playing for twenty-two hours at a sitting, and losing £500 an hour. That indomitable punter said that the greatest pleasure in life, after winning, was losing. What hours, what nights, what health did he waste over the devil's books! I was going to say what peace of mind; but he took his losses very philosophically. After an awful night's play, and the enjoyment of the greatest pleasure but *one* in life, he was found on a sofa tranquilly reading an Eclogue of Virgil.

Play survived long after the wild Prince and Fox had given up the dice-box. The dandies continued it. Byron, Brummell—how many names could I mention of men of the world who have suffered by it! In 1837 occurred a famous trial which pretty nigh put an end to gambling in England. A peer of the realm was found cheating at whist, and repeatedly seen to practise the trick called *sauter la coupe*. His friends at the clubs saw him cheat, and went on playing with him. One greenhorn, who had discovered his foul play, asked an old hand what he should do. "Do?" said the Mammon of Unrighteousness. "*Back him, you fool!*" The best efforts were made to screen him. People wrote him anonymous letters and warned him; but he would cheat, and they were obliged to find him out. Since that day, when my lord's shame was made public, the gaming-table has lost all its splendour. Shabby Jews and blacklegs prowl about racecourses and tavern parlours, and now and then inveigle silly yokels with greasy packs of cards in railroad cars: but Play is a deposed goddess, her worshippers bankrupt and her table in rags.

So is another famous British institution gone to decay —the Ring; the noble practice of British boxing, which in my youth was still almost flourishing.

The Prince, in his early days, was a great patron of this national sport, as his grand-uncle Culloden Cumberland had been before him; but being present at a fight at Brighton, where one of the combatants was killed, the Prince pensioned the boxer's widow, and declared he never would attend another battle. "But, nevertheless," —I read in the noble language of Pierce Egan (whose smaller work on Pugilism I have the honour to possess), —"he thought it a manly and decided English feature, which ought not to be destroyed. His Majesty had a drawing of the sporting characters in the Fives Court placed in his boudoir, to remind him of his former attachment and support of true courage; and when any fight of note occurred after he was king, accounts of it were read to him by his desire." That gives one a fine image of a king taking his recreation;—at ease in a royal

dressing-gown;—too majestic to read himself, ordering the prime minister to read him accounts of battles: how Cribb punched Molyneux's eye, or Jack Randall thrashed the Game Chicken.

Where my Prince *did* actually distinguish himself was in driving. He drove once in four hours and a half from Brighton to Carlton House—fifty-six miles. All the young men of that day were fond of that sport. But the fashion of rapid driving deserted England; and, I believe, trotted over to America. Where are the amusements of our youth? I hear of no gambling now but amongst obscure ruffians; of no boxing but amongst the lowest rabble. One solitary four-in-hand still drove round the parks in London last year; but that charioteer must soon disappear. He was very old; he was attired after the fashion of the year 1825. He must drive to the banks of Styx ere long—where the ferry-boat waits to carry him over to the defunct revellers who boxed and gambled and drank and drove with King George.

The bravery of the Brunswicks, that all the family must have it, that George possessed it, are points which all English writers have agreed to admit; and yet I cannot see how George IV should have been endowed with this quality. Swaddled in feather-beds all his life, lazy, obese, perpetually eating and drinking, his education was quite unlike that of his tough old progenitors. His grandsires had confronted hardship and war, and ridden up and fired their pistols undaunted into the face of death. His father had conquered luxury and overcome indolence. Here was one who never resisted any temptation; never had a desire but he coddled and pampered it; if ever he had any nerve, frittered it away among cooks, and tailors, and barbers, and furniture-mongers, and opera-dancers. What muscle would not grow flaccid in such a life—a life that was never strung up to any action—an endless Capua without any campaign—all fiddling, and flowers, and feasting, and flattery, and folly? When George III was pressed by the Catholic question and the India Bill, he said he would retire to Hanover rather than yield upon either point; and he

would have done what he said. But, before yielding, he was determined to fight his Ministers and Parliament; and he did, and he beat them. The time came when George IV was pressed too upon the Catholic claims; the cautious Peel had slipped over to that side; the grim old Wellington had joined it; and Peel tells us, in his *Memoirs*, what was the conduct of the King. He at first refused to submit; whereupon Peel and the Duke offered their resignations, which their gracious master accepted. He did these two gentlemen the honour, Peel says, to kiss them both when they went away. (Fancy old Arthur's grim countenance and eagle beak as the monarch kisses it!) When they were gone he sent after them, surrendered, and wrote to them a letter begging them to remain in office, and allowing them to have their way. Then his Majesty had a meeting with Eldon, which is related at curious length in the latter's *Memoirs*. He told Eldon what was not true about his interview with the new Catholic converts; utterly misled the old ex-Chancellor; cried, whimpered, fell on his neck, and kissed him too. We know old Eldon's own tears were pumped very freely. Did these two fountains gush together? I can't fancy a behaviour more unmanly, imbecile, pitiable. This a defender of the faith! This a chief in the crisis of a great nation! This an inheritor of the courage of the Georges!

Many of my hearers no doubt have journeyed to the pretty old town of Brunswick, in company with that most worthy, prudent, and polite gentleman, the Earl of Malmesbury, and fetched away Princess Caroline for her longing husband, the Prince of Wales. Old Queen Charlotte would have had her eldest son marry a niece of her own, that famous Louisa of Strelitz, afterwards Queen of Prussia, and who shares with Marie Antoinette in the last age the sad pre-eminence of beauty and misfortune. But George III had a niece at Brunswick: she was a richer princess than her Serene Highness of Strelitz:—in fine, the Princess Caroline was selected to marry the heir to the English throne. We follow my Lord Malmesbury in quest of her; we are introduced to her illustrious

father and royal mother; we witness the balls and fêtes of the old court; we are presented to the Princess herself, with her fair hair, her blue eyes, and her impertinent shoulders—a lively, bouncing, romping Princess, who takes the advice of her courtly English mentor most generously and kindly. We can be present at her very toilette, if we like; regarding which, and for very good reasons, the British courtier implores her to be particular. What a strange court! What a queer privacy of morals and manners do we look into! Shall we regard it as preachers and moralists, and cry Woe, against the open vice and selfishness and corruption; or look at it as we do at the king in the pantomime, with his pantomime wife and pantomime courtiers, whose big heads he knocks together, whom he pokes with his pantomime sceptre, whom he orders to prison under the guard of his pantomime beefeaters, as he sits down to dine on his pantomime pudding? It is grave, it is sad; it is theme most curious for moral and political speculation; it is monstrous, grotesque, laughable, with its prodigious littlenesses, etiquettes, ceremonials, sham moralities; it is as serious as a sermon, and as absurd and outrageous as Punch's puppet-show.

Malmesbury tells us of the private life of the Duke, Princess Caroline's father, who was to die, like his warlike son, in arms against the French; presents us to his courtiers, his favourite; his Duchess, George III's sister, a grim old Princess, who took the British envoy aside, and told him wicked old stories of wicked old dead people and times; who came to England afterwards when her nephew was regent, and lived in a shabby furnished lodging, old, and dingy, and deserted, and grotesque, but somehow royal. And we go with him to the Duke to demand the Princess's hand in form, and we hear the Brunswick guns fire their adieux of salute, as H.R.H. the Princess of Wales departs in the frost and snow; and we visit the domains of the Prince Bishop of Osnaburg—the Duke of York of our early time; and we dodge about from the French revolutionists, whose ragged legions are pouring over Holland

and Germany, and gaily trampling down the old world to the tune of *ça ira*; and we take shipping at Stade, and we land at Greenwich, where the Princess's ladies and the Prince's ladies are in waiting to receive her Royal Highness.

What a history follows! Arrived in London, the bridegroom hastened eagerly to receive his bride. When she was first presented to him, Lord Malmesbury says she very properly attempted to kneel. "He raised her gracefully enough, embraced her, and turning round to me, said,—

"'Harris, I am not well; pray get me a glass of brandy.'

"I said, 'Sir, had you not better have a glass of water?'

"Upon which, much out of humour, he said, with an oath, 'No; I will go to the Queen.'"

What could be expected from a wedding which had such a beginning—from such a bridegroom and such a bride? I am not going to carry you through the scandal of that story, or follow the poor Princess through all her vagaries; her balls and her dances, her travels to Jerusalem and Naples, her jigs, and her junketings, and her tears. As I read her trial in history, I vote she is not guilty. I don't say it is an impartial verdict; but as one reads her story the heart bleeds for the kindly, generous, outraged creature. If wrong there be, let it lie at his door who wickedly thrust her from it. Spite of her follies, the great hearty people of England loved, and protected, and pitied her. "God bless you! we will bring your husband back to you," said a mechanic one day, as she told Lady Charlotte Bury with tears streaming down her cheeks. They could not bring that husband back; they could not cleanse that selfish heart. Was hers the only one he had wounded? Steeped in selfishness, impotent for faithful attachment and manly enduring love,—had it not survived remorse, was it not accustomed to desertion?

Malmesbury gives us the beginning of the marriage story—how the Prince reeled into chapel to be married:

how he hiccupped out his vows of fidelity—you know how he kept them; how he pursued the woman whom he had married; to what a state he brought her; with what blows he struck her; with what malignity he pursued her; what his treatment of his daughter was; and what his own life. *He* the first gentleman of Europe! There is no stronger satire on the proud English society of that day, than that they admired George.

No, thank God, we can tell of better gentlemen; and whilst our eyes turn away, shocked, from this monstrous image of pride, vanity, weakness, they may see in that England over which the last George pretended to reign, some who merit indeed the title of gentlemen, some who make our hearts beat when we hear their names, and whose memory we fondly salute when that of yonder imperial manikin is tumbled into oblivion. I will take men of my own profession of letters. I will take Walter Scott, who loved the King, and who was his sword and buckler, and championed him like that brave Highlander in his own story, who fights round his craven chief. What a good gentleman! What a friendly soul, what a generous hand, what an amiable life was that of the noble Sir Walter! I will take another man of letters, whose life I admire even more,—an English worthy, doing his duty for fifty noble years of labour, day by day storing up learning, day by day working for scant wages, most charitable out of his small means, bravely faithful to the calling which he had chosen, refusing to turn from his path for popular praise or princes' favour;—I mean *Robert Southey*. We have left his old political landmarks miles and miles behind; we protest against his dogmatism; nay, we begin to forget it and his politics: but I hope his life will not be forgotten, for it is sublime in its simplicity, its energy, its honour, its affection. In the combat between Time and Thalaba, I suspect the former destroyer has conquered. Kehama's curse frightens very few reader's now; but Southey's private letters are worth piles of epics, and are sure to last among us, as long as kind hearts like to sympathize with goodness and purity, and

love and upright life. "If your feelings are like mine," he writes to his wife, "I will not go to Lisbon without you, or I will stay at home, and not part from you. For though not unhappy when away, still without you I am not happy. For your sake, as well as my own and little Edith's, I will not consent to any separation; the growth of a year's love between her and me, if it please God she should live, is a thing too delightful in itself, and too valuable in its consequences, to be given up for any light inconvenience on your part or mine. . . . On these things we will talk at leisure; only, dear, dear Edith, *we must not part!*"

This was a poor literary gentleman. The First Gentleman in Europe had a wife and daughter too. Did he love them so? Was he faithful to them? Did he sacrifice ease for them, or show them the sacred examples of religion and honour? Heaven gave the Great English Prodigal no such good fortune. Peel proposed to make a baronet of Southey; and to this advancement the King agreed. The poet nobly rejected the offered promotion.

"I have," he wrote, "a pension of £200 a year, conferred upon me by the good offices of my old friend C. Wynn, and I have the laureateship. The salary of the latter was immediately appropriated, as far as it went, to a life-insurance for £3,000, which, with an earlier insurance, is the sole provision I have made for my family. All beyond must be derived from my own industry. Writing for a livelihood, a livelihood is all that I have gained; for, having also something better in view, and never, therefore, having courted popularity, nor written for the mere sake of gain, it has not been possible for me to lay by anything. Last year, for the first time in my life, I was provided with a year's expenditure beforehand. This exposition may show how unbecoming and unwise it would be to accept the rank which, so greatly to my honour, you have solicited for me."

How noble his poverty is, compared to the wealth of his master! His acceptance even of a pension was

made the object of his opponents' satire; but think of the merit and modesty of this State pensioner; and that other enormous drawer of public money, who receives £100,000 a year, and comes to Parliament with a request for £650,000 more!

Another true knight of those days was Cuthbert Collingwood; and I think, since Heaven made gentlemen, there is no record of a better one than that. Of brighter deeds, I grant you, we may read performed by others; but where of a nobler, kinder, more beautiful life of duty, of a gentler, truer art? Beyond dazzle of success and blaze of genius, I fancy shining a hundred and a hundred times higher, the sublime purity of Collingwood's gentle glory. His heroism stirs British hearts when we recall it. His love, and goodness, and piety make one thrill with happy emotion. As one reads of him and his great comrade going into the victory with which their names are immortally connected, how the old English word comes up, and that old English feeling of what I should like to call Christian honour! What gentlemen they were, what great hearts they had! "We can, my dear Coll," writes Nelson to him, "have no little jealousies; we have only one great object in view—that of meeting the enemy, and getting a glorious peace for our country." At Trafalgar, when the "Royal Sovereign" was pressing alone into the midst of the combined fleets, Lord Nelson said to Captain Blackwood: "See how that noble fellow, Collingwood, takes his ship into action! How I envy him!" The very same throb and impulse of heroic generosity was beating in Collingwood's honest bosom. As he led into the fight he said: "What would Nelson give to be here!"

After the action of the 1st of June, he writes:—"We cruised for a few days, like disappointed people looking for what they could not find, *until the morning of little Sarah's birthday*, between eight and nine o'clock, when the French fleet, of twenty-five sail of the line, was discovered to windward. We chased them, and they bore down within about five miles of us. The night was spent in watching and preparation for the succeeding day; and

many a blessing did I send forth to my Sarah, lest I should never bless her more. At dawn, we made our approach on the enemy, then drew up, dressed our ranks, and it was about eight when the admiral made the signal for each ship to engage her opponent, and bring her to close action; and then down we went under a crowd of sail, and in a manner that would have animated the coldest heart, and struck terror into the most intrepid enemy. The ship we were to engage was two ahead of the French admiral, so we had to go through his fire and that of two ships next to him, and received all their broadsides two or three times, before we fired a gun. It was then near ten o'clock. I observed to the admiral, that about that time our wives were going to church, but that I thought the peal we should ring about the Frenchman's ear would outdo their parish bells."

There are no words to tell what the heart feels in reading the simple phrases of such a hero. Here is victory and courage, but love sublimer and superior. Here is a Christian soldier spending the night before battle in watching and preparing for the succeeding day, thinking of his dearest home, and sending many blessings forth to his Sarah, "lest he should never bless her more." Who would not say Amen to his supplication? It was a benediction to his country—the prayer of that intrepid loving heart.

We have spoken of a good soldier and good men of letters as specimens of English gentlemen of the age just past: may we not also—many of my elder hearers, I am sure, have read, and fondly remember his delightful story—speak of a good divine, and mention Reginald Heber as one of the best of English gentlemen? The charming poet, the happy possessor of all sorts of gifts and accomplishments, birth, wit, fame, high character, competence—he was the beloved parish-priest in his own home of Hodnet, "counselling his people in their troubles, advising them in their difficulties, comforting them in distress, kneeling often at their sick beds at the hazard of his own life: exhorting,

encouraging where there was need; where there was strife, the peace-maker; where there was want, the free giver."

When the Indian bishopric was offered to him he refused at first; but after communing with himself (and committing his case to the quarter whither such pious men are wont to carry their doubts), he withdrew his refusal, and prepared himself for his mission and to leave his beloved parish. "Little children, love one another, and forgive one another," were the last sacred words he said to his weeping people. He parted with them, knowing, perhaps, he should see them no more. Like those other good men of whom we have just spoken, love and duty were his life's aim. Happy he, happy they who were so gloriously faithful to both! He writes to his wife those charming lines on his journey:—

If thou, my love, wert by my side, my babies at my knee,
How gladly would our pinnace glide o'er Gunga's mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray, when, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay and woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream my twilight steps I guide;
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam I miss thee by my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try, the lingering noon to cheer;
But miss thy kind approving eye, thy meek attentive ear.

But when of morn and eve the star beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far, thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads my course be onward still,—
O'er broad Hindostan's sultry meads, o'er bleak Almorah's hill.

That course nor Delhi's kingly gates, nor wild Malwah detain,
For sweet the bliss us both awaits by yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say, across the dark blue sea:
But ne'er were hearts so blithe and gay as there shall meet in thee!

Is it not Collingwood and Sarah, and Southey and Edith? His affection is part of his life. What were life without it? Without love, I can fancy no gentleman.

How touching is a remark Heber makes in his

Travels through India, that on inquiring of the natives at a town, which of the governors of India stood highest in the opinion of the people, he found that, though Lord Wellesley and Warren Hastings were honoured as the two greatest men who had ever ruled this part of the world, the people spoke with chief affection of Judge Cleveland, who had died, aged twenty-nine, in 1784. The people have built a monument over him, and still hold a religious feast in his memory. So does his own country still tend with a heart's regard the memory of the gentle Heber.

And Cleveland died in 1784, and is still loved by the heathen, is he? Why, that year 1784 was remarkable in the life of our friend the First Gentleman of Europe. Do you not know that he was twenty-one in that year, and opened Carlton House with a grand ball to the nobility and gentry, and doubtless wore that lovely pink coat which we have described. I was eager to read about the ball, and looked to the old magazines for information. The entertainment took place on the 10th February. In the *European Magazine* of March, 1784, I came straightway upon it:—

"The alterations at Carlton House being finished, we lay before our readers a description of the state apartments as they appeared on the 10th instant, when H.R.H. gave a grand ball to the principal nobility and gentry. . . . The entrance to the state room fills the mind with an inexpressible idea of greatness and splendour.

"The state chair is of a gold frame, covered with crimson damask; on each corner of the feet is a lion's head, expressive of fortitude and strength; the feet of the chair have serpents twining round them, to denote wisdom. Facing the throne, appears the helmet of Minerva; and over the windows, glory is represented by St. George with a superb gloria.

"But the saloon may be styled the *chef d'œuvre*, and in every ornament discovers great invention. It is hung with a figured lemon satin. The window-curtains, sofas, and chairs are of the same colour. The ceiling is orna-

mented with emblematical paintings, representing the Graces and Muses, together with Jupiter, Mercury, Apollo, and Paris. Two *ormolu* chandeliers are placed here. It is impossible by expression to do justice to the extraordinary workmanship as well as design of the ornaments. They each consist of a palm, branching out in five directions for the reception of lights. A beautiful figure of a rural nymph is represented entwining the stems of the tree with wreaths of flowers. In the centre of the room is a rich chandelier. To see this apartment *dans son plus beau jour*, it should be viewed in the glass over the chimney-piece. The range of apartments from the saloon to the ball-room, when the doors are open, formed one of the grandest spectacles that ever was beheld."

In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for the very same month and year—March, 1784—is an account of another festival, in which another great gentleman of English extraction is represented as taking a principal share:—

"According to order, H.E. the Commander-in-Chief was admitted to a public audience of Congress; and, being seated, the President, after a pause, informed him that the United States assembled were ready to receive his communications. Whereupon he arose, and spoke as follows:—

"'Mr. President—The great events on which my resignation depended having at length taken place, I present myself before Congress to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, I resign the appointment I accepted with diffidence; which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the nation, and the patronage of Heaven. I close this last act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to His holy keeping. Having finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great

theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission and take my leave of the employments of my public life.'

"To which the President replied:—

"'Sir, having defended the standard of liberty in the New World, having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict and those who feel oppression, you retire with the blessings of your fellow-citizens; though the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command, but will descend to remotest ages.'"

Which was the most splendid spectacle ever witnessed—the opening feast of Prince George in London, or the resignation of Washington? Which is the noble character for after ages to admire—yon fribble dancing in lace and spangles, or yonder hero who sheathes his sword after a life of spotless honour, a purity unreproached, a courage indomitable, and a consummate victory? Which of these is the true gentleman? What is it to be a gentleman? Is it to have lofty aims, to lead a pure life, to keep your honour virgin; to have the esteem of your fellow-citizens, and the love of your fireside; to bear good fortune meekly; to suffer evil with constancy; and through evil or good to maintain truth always? Show me the happy man whose life exhibits these qualities, and him we will salute as gentleman, whatever his rank may be; show me the prince who possesses them, and he may be sure of our love and loyalty. The heart of Britain still beats kindly for George III—not because he was wise and just, but because he was pure in life, honest in intent, and because according to his lights he worshipped Heaven. I think we acknowledge in the inheritrix of his sceptre, a wiser rule, and a life as honourable and pure; and I am sure the future painter of our manners will pay a willing allegiance to that good life, and be loyal to the memory of that unsullied virtue.

THE FITZ-BOODLE PAPERS

[These slighter specimens of Thackeray as essayist or literary entertainer do not need separate prefaces; such a preface would overload things naturally light. A word of explanation may be offered, however, of the introduction of one of his forgotten figures, George Savage Fitz-Boodle. Both the man and the absurd essay for which he stands are really valid as building up the big bulk of the Thackerayan personality. They represent that part of him that was the epicure and connoisseur of wine, a part not so important as those called philosopher and artist, but quite as characteristic, and (as this extract will probably show), quite as amusing. Fitz-Boodle, an amiable and objectless club-man like Major Pendennis, has just described how a real gentleman would make an excellent auctioneer. He proceeds to suggest another gentlemanly calling.]

ONE OF FITZ-BOODLE'S PROFESSIONS

This profession, too, is a great, lofty, and exceptional one, and discovered by me considering these things, and deeply musing upon the necessities of society. Nor let honourable gentlemen imagine that I am enabled to offer them in this profession, more than any other, a promise of what is called future glory, deathless fame, and so forth. All that I say is, that I can put young men in the way of making a comfortable livelihood, and leaving behind them, not a name, but what is better, a decent maintenance to their children. Fitz-Boodle is as good a name as any in England. General Fitz-Boodle, who in Marlborough's time, and in conjunction with the famous Van Slaap, beat the French in the famous action of Vischzouchee, near Mardyk, in Holland, on the 14th of February, 1709, is promised an immortality upon his tomb in Westminster Abbey; but he died of

apoplexy, deucedly in debt, two years afterwards: and what after that is the use of a name?

No, no; the age of chivalry is past. Take the twenty-four first men who come into the club, and ask who they are, and how they made their money? There's Woolsey-Sackville: his father was Lord Chancellor, and sat on the woolsack, whence he took his title; his grandfather dealt in coal-sacks, and not in wool-sacks—small coal-sacks, dribbling out little supplies of black diamonds to the poor. Yonder comes Frank Leveson, in a huge broad-brimmed hat, his shirt-cuffs turned up to his elbows. Leveson is as gentlemanly a fellow as the world contains, and if he has a fault, is perhaps too finikin. Well, you fancy him related to the Sutherland family: nor, indeed, does honest Frank deny it; but *entre nous*, my good sir, his father was an attorney, and his grandfather a bailiff in Chancery Lane, bearing a name still older than that of Leveson, namely, Levy. So it is that this confounded equality grows and grows, and has laid the good old nobility by the heels. Look at that venerable Sir Charles Kitely, of Kitely Park: he is interested about the Ashantees, and is just come from Exeter Hall. Kitely discounted bills in the City in the year 1787, and gained his baronetcy by a loan to the French princes. All these points of history are perfectly well known; and do you fancy the world cares? Psha! Profession is no disgrace to a man: be what you like, provided you succeed. If Mr. Fauntleroy could come to life with a million of money, you and I would dine with him: you know we would; for why should we be better than our neighbours?

Put, then, out of your head the idea that this or that profession is unworthy of you: take any that may bring you profit, and thank him that puts you in the way of being rich.

The profession I would urge (upon a person duly qualified to undertake it) has, I confess, at the first glance, something ridiculous about it; and will not appear to young ladies so romantic as the calling of a gallant soldier, blazing with glory, gold lace, and ver-

milion coats; or a dear, delightful clergyman, with a sweet blue eye, and a pocket-handkerchief scented charmingly with lavender-water. The profession I allude to *will*, I own, be to young women disagreeable, to sober men trivial, to great stupid moralists unworthy.

But mark my words for it, that in the religious world (I have once or twice, by mistake no doubt, had the honour of dining in "serious" houses, and can vouch for the fact that the dinners there are of excellent quality)—in the serious world, in the great mercantile world, among the legal community (notorious feeders), in every house in town (except some half-dozen which can afford to do without such aid), the man I propose might speedily render himself indispensable.

Does the reader now begin to take? Have I hinted enough for him that he may see with eagle glance the immense beauty of the profession I am about to unfold to him? We have all seen Gunter and Chevet; Fregoso, on the Puerta del Sol (a relation of the ex-Minister Calomarde), is a good purveyor enough for the benighted olla-eaters of Madrid; nor have I any fault to find with Guimard, a Frenchman, who has lately set up in the Toledo at Naples, where he furnishes people with decent food. It has given me pleasure, too, in walking about London—in the Strand, in Oxford Street, and elsewhere, to see fournisseurs and comestible-merchants newly set up. Messrs. Morell have excellent articles in their warehouses; Fortnum and Mason are known to most of my readers.

But what is not known, what is wanted, what is languished for in England is a *dinner-master*—a gentleman who is not a provider of meat or wine, like the parties before named, who can have no earthly interest in the price of truffled turkeys or dry champagne beyond that legitimate interest which he may feel for his client, and which leads him to see that the latter is not cheated by his tradesmen. For the dinner-giver is almost naturally an ignorant man. How in mercy's name can Mr. Serjeant Snorter, who is all day at Westminster, or in chambers, know possibly the mysteries, the delicacy, of

dinner-giving? How can Alderman Pogson know anything beyond the fact that venison is good with currant-jelly, and that he likes lots of green fat with his turtle? Snorter knows law, Pogson is acquainted with the state of the tallow-market; but what should he know of eating, like you and me, who have given up our time to it? (I say *me* only familiarly, for I have only reached so far in the science as to know that I know nothing.) But men there are, gifted individuals, who have spent years of deep thought—not merely intervals of labour, but hours of study every day—over the gormandizing science—who, like alchemists, have let their fortunes go, guinea by guinea, into the all-devouring pot—who, ruined as they sometimes are, never get a guinea by chance but they will have a plate of pease in May with it, or a little feast of ortolans, or a piece of Glo'ster salmon, or one more flask from their favourite claret-bin.

It is not the ruined gastronomist that I would advise a person to select as his *table-master:* for the opportunities of peculation would be too great in a position of such confidence—such complete abandonment of one man to another. A ruined man would be making bargains with the tradesmen. They would offer to cash bills for him, or send him opportune presents of wine, which he could convert into money, or bribe him in one way or another. Let this be done, and the profession of table-master is ruined. Snorter and Pogson may almost as well order their own dinners, as be at the mercy of a "gastronomic agent" whose faith is not beyond all question.

A vulgar mind, in reply to these remarks regarding the gastronomic ignorance of Snorter and Pogson, might say, "True, these gentlemen know nothing of household economy, being occupied with other more important business elsewhere. But what are their wives about? Lady Pogson in Harley Street has nothing earthly to do but to mind her poodle, and her mantua-maker's and housekeeper's bills. Mrs. Snorter in Bedford Place, when she has taken her drive in the Park with the young

ladies, may surely have time to attend to her husband's guests and preside over the preparations of his kitchen, as she does worthily at his hospitable mahogany." To this I answer, that a man who expects a woman to understand the philosophy of dinner-giving, shows the strongest evidence of a low mind. He is unjust towards that lovely and delicate creature, woman, to suppose that she heartily understands and cares for what she eats and drinks. No: taken as a rule, women have no real appetites. They are children in the gormandizing way; loving sugar, sops, tarts, trifles, apricot creams, and such gewgaws. They would take a sip of Malmsey, and would drink currant wine just as happily, if that accursed liquor were presented to them by the butler. Did you ever know a woman who could lay her fair hand upon her gentle heart and say on her conscience that she preferred dry sillery to sparkling champagne? Such a phenomenon does not exist. They are not made for eating and drinking; or, if they make a pretence to it, become downright odious. Nor can they, I am sure, witness the preparations of a really great repast without a certain jealousy. They grudge spending money (ask guards, coachmen, inn-waiters, whether this be not the case). They will give their all, heaven bless them! to serve a son, a grandson, or a dear relative, but they have not the heart to pay for small things magnificently. They are jealous of good dinners, and no wonder. I have shown in a former discourse how they are jealous of smoking, and other personal enjoyments of the male. I say, then, that Lady Pogson or Mrs. Snorter can never conduct their husbands' table properly. Fancy either of them consenting to allow a calf to be stewed down into gravy for one dish, or a dozen hares to be sacrificed to a single *purée* of game, or the best Madeira to be used for a sauce, or half a dozen of champagne to boil a ham in. They will be for bringing a bottle of Marsala in place of the old particular, or for having the ham cooked in water. But of these matters—of kitchen philosophy—I have no practical or theoretic knowledge; and must beg pardon if, only understanding the goodness of a dish when

cooked, I may have unconsciously made some blunder regarding the preparation.

Let it, then, be set down as an axiom, without further trouble of demonstration, that a woman is a bad dinner-caterer; either too great and simple for it, or too mean—I don't know which it is; and gentlemen, according as they admire or contemn the sex, may settle that matter their own way. In brief, the mental constitution of lovely woman is such that she cannot give a great dinner. It must be done by a man. It can't be done by an ordinary man, because he does not understand it. Vain fool! and he sends off to the pastrycook in Great Russell Street or Baker Street, he lays on a couple of extra waiters (green-grocers in the neighbourhood), he makes a great pother with his butler in the cellar, and fancies he has done the business.

Bon Dieu! Who has not been at those dinners?—those monstrous exhibitions of the pastrycook's art? Who does not know those made dishes with the universal sauce to each; fricandeaux, sweetbreads, damp dumpy cutlets, etc., seasoned with the compound of grease, onions, bad port-wine, cayenne pepper, curry-powder (Warren's blacking, for what I know, but the taste is always the same)—there they lie in the old corner dishes, the poor wiry Moselle and sparkling Burgundy in the ice-coolers, and the old story of white and brown soup, turbot, little smelts, boiled turkey, saddle-of-mutton, and so forth? "Try a little of that fricandeau," says Mrs. Snorter, with a kind smile. "You'll find it, I think, very nice." Be sure it has come in a green tray from Great Russell Street. "Mr. Fitz-Boodle, you have been in Germany," cries Snorter, knowingly; "taste the hock, and tell me what you think of *that*."

How should he know better, poor benighted creature; or she, dear good soul that she is? If they would have a leg of mutton and an apple-pudding, and a glass of sherry and port (or simple brandy-and-water called by its own name) after dinner, all would be very well; but they must shine, they must dine as their neighbours. There is no difference in the style of dinners in London;

people with five hundred a year treat you exactly as those of five thousand. They *will* have their Moselle or hock, their fatal side-dishes brought in the green trays from the pastry-cook's.

Well, there is no harm done; not as regards the dinner-givers at least, though the dinner-eaters may have to suffer somewhat; it only shows that the former are hospitably inclined, and wish to do the very best in their power,—good honest fellows! If they do wrong, how can they help it? they know no better.

And now, is it not as clear as the sun at noon-day, that A WANT exists in London for a superintendent of the table—a gastronomic agent—a dinner-master, as I have called him before? A man of such a profession would be a metropolitan benefit; hundreds of thousands of people of the respectable sort, people in white waistcoats, would thank him daily. Calculate how many dinners are given in the City of London, and calculate the numbers of benedictions that "the Agency" might win.

And as no doubt the observant man of the world has remarked that the freeborn Englishmen of the respectable class is, of all others, the most slavish and truckling to a lord; that there is no fly-blown peer but he is pleased to have him at his table, proud beyond measure to call him by his surname (without the lordly prefix); and that those lords whom he does not know, he yet (the freeborn Englishman) takes care to have their pedigrees and ages by heart from his world-bible, the "Peerage:" as this is an indisputable fact, and as it is in this particular class of Britons that our agent must look to find clients, I need not say it is necessary that the agent should be as high-born as possible, and that he should be able to tack, if possible, an honourable or some other handle to his respectable name. He must have it on his professional card—

The Honourable George Gormand Gobbleton,

Apician Chambers, Pall Mall.

Or,

> **Sir Augustus Carver Cramley Cramley,**
>
> *Amphitryonic Council Office, Swallow Street.*

or, in some such neat way, Gothic letters on a large handsome crockeryware card, with possibly a gilt coat-of-arms and supporters, or the blood-red hand of baronetcy duly displayed. Depend on it plenty of guineas will fall in it, and that Gobbleton's supporters will support him comfortably enough.

For this profession is not like that of the auctioneer, which I take to be a far more noble one, because more varied and more truthful; but in the Agency case, a little humbug at least is necessary. A man cannot be a successful agent by the mere force of his simple merit or genius in eating and drinking. He must of necessity impose upon the vulgar to a certain degree. He must be of that rank which will lead them naturally to respect him, otherwise they might be led to jeer at his profession; but let a noble exercise it, and, bless your soul, all the "Court Guide" is dumb!

He will then give out in a manly and somewhat pompous address what has before been mentioned, namely, that he has seen the fatal way in which the hospitality of England has been perverted hitherto, *accaparé*'d by a few cooks with green trays. (He must use a good deal of French in his language, for that is considered very gentleman-like by vulgar people.) He will take a set of chambers in Carlton Gardens, which will be richly though severely furnished, and the door of which will be opened by a French valet (he *must* be a Frenchman, remember), who will say, on letting Mr. Snorter or Sir Benjamin Pogson in, that "*Milor* is at home." Pogson will then be shown into a library furnished with massive book-cases, containing all the works on cookery and wines (the titles of them) in all the

known languages in the world. Any books, of course, will do, as you will have them handsomely bound, and keep them under plate-glass. On a side-table will be little sample-bottles of wines, a few truffles on a white porcelain saucer, a prodigious strawberry or two, perhaps, at the time when such fruit costs much money. On the library will be busts marked Ude, Carème, Béchamel, in marble (never mind what heads, of course); and, perhaps, on the clock should be a figure of the Prince of Condé's cook killing himself because the fish had not arrived in time: there may be a wreath of *immortelles* on the figure to give it a more decidedly Frenchified air. The walls will be of a dark rich paper, hung round with neat gilt frames, containing plans of *menus* of various great dinners,—those of Cambacérès, Napoleon, Louis XIV, Louis XVIII, Heliogabalus if you like, each signed by the respective cook.

After the stranger has looked about him at these things, which he does not understand in the least, especially the truffles, which look like dirty potatoes, you will make your appearance, dressed in a dark dress, with one handsome enormous gold chain, and one large diamond ring; a gold snuff-box, of course, which you will thrust into the visitor's paw before saying a word. You will be yourself a portly grave man, with your hair a little bald and gray. In fact, in this, as in all other professions, you had best try to look as like Canning as you can.

When Pogson has done sneezing with the snuff, you will say to him, "Take a *fauteuil*. I have the honour of addressing Sir Benjamin Pogson, I believe?" And then you will explain to him your system.

This, of course, must vary with every person you address. But let us lay down a few of the heads of a plan which may be useful, or may be modified infinitely, or may be cast aside altogether, just as circumstances dictate. After all *I* am not going to turn gastronomic agent, and speak only for the benefit perhaps of the very person who is reading this:—

"Synopsis of the Gastronomic Agency of the Honourable George Gobbleton.

"The Gastronomic Agent having traversed Europe, and dined with the best society of the world, has been led naturally, as a patriot, to turn his thoughts homeward, and cannot but deplore the lamentable ignorance regarding gastronomy displayed in a country for which Nature has done almost everything.

"But it is ever singularly thus. Inherent ignorance belongs to man; and The Agent, in his Continental travels, has always remarked, that the countries most fertile in themselves were invariably worse tilled than those more barren. The Italians and the Spaniards leave their fields to Nature, as we leave our vegetables, fish, and meat. And, heavens! what richness do we fling away,—what dormant qualities in our dishes do we disregard,—what glorious gastronomic crops (if The Agent may be permitted the expression)—what glorious gastronomic crops do we sacrifice, allowing our goodly meats and fishes to lie fallow! 'Chance,' it is said by an ingenious historian, who, having been long a secretary in the East India House, must certainly have had access to the best information upon Eastern matters—'Chance,' it is said by Mr. Charles Lamb, 'which burnt down a Chinaman's house, with a litter of sucking-pigs that were unable to escape from the interior, discovered to the world the excellence of roast-pig.' Gunpowder, we know, was invented by a similar fortuity." [The reader will observe that my style in the supposed character of a Gastronomic Agent is purposely pompous and loud.] "So, 'tis said, was printing,—so glass.—We should have drunk our wine poisoned with the villanous odour of the borachio, had not some Eastern merchants, lighting their fires in the Desert, marked the strange composition which now glitters on our sideboards, and holds the costly produce of our vines.

"We have spoken of the natural riches of a country. Let the reader think but for one moment of the gastronomic wealth of our country of England, and he will be lost in thankful amazement as he watches the astonishing riches poured out upon us from Nature's bounteous cornucopia! Look at our fisheries!—the trout and salmon tossing in our brawling streams; the white and full-breasted turbot struggling in the mariner's net; the purple lobster lured by hopes of greed into his basket-prison, which he quits only for the red ordeal of the pot. Look at whitebait, great heavens!—look at whitebait, and a thousand frisking, glittering, silvery

things besides, which the nymphs of our native streams bear kindly to the deities of our kitchens—our kitchens such as they are.

"And though it may be said that other countries produce the freckle-backed salmon and the dark broad-shouldered turbot; though trout frequent many a stream besides those of England, and lobsters sprawl on other sands than ours; yet, let it be remembered, that our native country possesses these all together, while other lands only know them separately; that, above all, whitebait is peculiarly our country's—our city's own! Blessings and eternal praises be on it, and, of course, on brown bread and butter! And the Briton should further remember, with honest pride and thankfulness, the situation of his capital, of London: the lordly turtle floats from the sea into the stream, and from the stream to the city; the rapid fleets of all the world *se donnent rendezvous* in the docks of our silvery Thames; the produce of our coasts and provincial cities, east and west, is borne to us on the swift lines of lightning railroads. In a word—and no man but one who, like The Agent, has travelled Europe over, can appreciate the gift—there is no city on earth's surface so well supplied with fish as London!

"With respect to our meats, all praise is supererogatory. Ask the wretched hunter of *chevreuil*, the poor devourer of *rehbraten*, what they think of the noble English haunch, that, after bounding in the Park of Knowle or Windsor, exposes its magnificent flank upon some broad silver platter at our tables? It is enough to say of foreign venison, that *they are obliged to lard it.* Away! ours is the palm of roast; whether of the crisp mutton that crops the thymy herbage of our downs, or the noble ox who revels on lush Althorpian oil-cakes. What game is like to ours? Mans excels us in poultry, 'tis true; but 'tis only in merry England that the partridge has a flavour, that the turkey can almost *se passer de truffes*, that the jolly juicy goose can be eaten as he deserves.

"Our vegetables, moreover, surpass all comment; Art (by the means of glass) has wrung fruit out of the bosom of Nature, such as she grants to no other clime. And if we have no vineyards on our hills, we have gold to purchase their best produce. Nature, and enterprise that masters Nature, have done everything for our land.

"But, with all these prodigious riches in our power, is it not painful to reflect how absurdly we employ them? Can we say that we are in the habit of dining well? Alas, no! and The Agent, roaming o'er foreign lands, and seeing how, with small means and great ingenuity and perseverance, great

ends were effected, comes back sadly to his own country, whose wealth he sees absurdly wasted, whose energies are misdirected, and whose vast capabilities are allowed to lie idle. * * *" [Here should follow what I have only hinted at previously, a vivid and terrible picture of the degradation of our table.] "* * * Oh, for a master spirit, to give an impetus to the land, to see its great power directed in the right way, and its wealth not squandered or hidden, but nobly put out to interest and spent!

"The Agent dares not hope to win that proud station—to be the destroyer of a barbarous system wallowing in abusive prodigality—to become a dietetic reformer—the Luther of the table.

"But convinced of the wrongs which exist, he will do his humble endeavour to set them right, and to those who know that they are ignorant (and this is a vast step to knowledge) he offers his counsels, his active co-operation, his frank and kindly sympathy. The Agent's qualifications are these:

"1. He is of one of the best families in England; and has in himself, or through his ancestors, been accustomed to good living for centuries. In the reign of Henry V, his maternal great-great-grandfather, Roger de Gobylton" [*the name may be varied, of course, or the king's reign, or the dish invented*], "was the first who discovered the method of roasting a peacock whole, with his tail-feathers displayed; and the dish was served to the two kings at Rouen. Sir Walter Cramley, in Elizabeth's reign, produced before her Majesty, when at Killingworth Castle, mackerel with the famous *gooseberry sauce*, etc.

"2. He has, through life, devoted himself to no other study than that of the table: and has visited to that end the courts of all the monarchs of Europe: taking the receipts of the cooks, with whom he lives on terms of intimate friendship, often at enormous expense to himself.

"3. He has the same acquaintance with all the vintages of the Continent; having passed the autumn of 1811 (the comet year) on the great Weinberg of Johannisberg; being employed similarly at Bordeaux, in 1834; at Oporto, in 1820; and at Xeres de la Frontera, with his excellent friends, Duff, Gordon and Co., the year after. He travelled to India and back in company with fourteen pipes of madeira (on board of the 'Samuel Snob' East Indiaman, Captain Scuttler), and spent the vintage season in the island, with unlimited powers of observation granted to him by the great houses there.

"4. He has attended Mr. Groves of Charing Cross, and Mr. Giblett of Bond Street, in a course of purchases of fish

and meat; and is able at a glance to recognize the age of mutton, the primeness of beef, the firmness and freshness of fish of all kinds.

"5. He has visited the parks, the grouse-manors, and the principal gardens of England, in a similar professional point of view."

The Agent then, through his subordinates, engages to provide gentlemen who are about to give dinner-parties—

"1. With cooks to dress the dinners; a list of which gentlemen he has by him, and will recommend none who are not worthy of the strictest confidence.

"2. With a *menu* for the table, according to the price which the Amphitryon chooses to incur.

"3. He will, through correspondences with the various fournisseurs of the metropolis, provide them with viands, fruit, wine, etc., sending to Paris, if need be, where he has a a regular correspondence with Messrs. Chevet.

"4. He has a list of dexterous table-waiters (all answering to the name of John for fear of mistakes, the butler's name to be settled according to pleasure), and would strongly recommend that the servants of the house should be locked in the back-kitchen or servants' hall during the time the dinner takes place.

"5. He will receive and examine all the accounts of the fournisseurs,—of course pledging his honour as a gentleman not to receive one shilling of paltry gratification from the tradesmen he employs, but to see that the bills are more moderate, and their goods of better quality, than they would provide to any person of less experience than himself.

"6. His fee for superintending a dinner will be five guineas: and The Agent entreats his clients to trust *entirely* to him and his subordinates for the arrangement of the repast,—*not to think* of inserting dishes of their own invention, or producing wine from their own cellars, as he engages to have it brought in the best order, and fit for immediate drinking. Should the Amphitryon, however, desire some particular dish or wine, he must consult The Agent, in the first case by writing, in the second, by sending a sample to The Agent's chambers. For it is manifest that the whole complexion of a dinner may be altered by the insertion of a single dish; and, therefore, parties will do well to mention their wishes on the first interview with The Agent. He cannot be called upon to recompose his bill of fare, except at great risk to the *ensemble* of the dinner and enormous inconvenience to himself.

"7. The Agent will be at home for consultation from ten

o'clock until two—earlier, if gentlemen who are engaged at early hours in the City desire to have an interview: and be it remembered, that a *personal interview* is always the best: for it is greatly necessary to know not only the number but the character of the guests whom the Amphitryon proposes to entertain,—whether they are fond of any particular wine or dish, what is their state of health, rank, style, profession, etc.

"8. At two o'clock, he will commence his rounds; for as the metropolis is wide, it is clear that he must be early in the field in some districts. From 2 to 3 he will be in Russell Square and the neighbourhood; 3 to 3¾, Harley Street, Portland Place, Cavendish Square, and the environs; 3¾ to 4¼, Portman Square, Gloucester Place, Baker Street, etc.; 4¼ to 5, the new district about Hyde Park Terrace; 5 to 5¾, St. John's Wood and the Regent's Park. He will be in Grosvenor Square by 6, and in Belgrave Square, Pimlico, and its vicinity, by 7. Parties there are requested not to dine until 8 o'clock; and The Agent, once for all, peremptorily announces that he will NOT go to the Palace, where it is utterly impossible to serve a good dinner."

"To Tradesmen.

"Every Monday evening during the season the Gastronomic Agent proposes to give a series of trial-dinners, to which the principal gourmands of the metropolis, and a few of The Agent's most respectable clients, will be invited. Covers will be laid for *ten* at nine o'clock precisely. And as The Agent does not propose to exact a single shilling of profit from their bills, and as his recommendation will be of infinite value to them, the tradesmen he employs will furnish the weekly dinner gratis. Cooks will attend (who have acknowledged characters) upon the same terms. To save trouble, a book will be kept where butchers, poulterers, fishmongers, etc., may inscribe their names in order, taking it by turns to supply the trial-table. Wine-merchants will naturally compete every week promiscuously, sending what they consider their best samples, and leaving with the hall-porter tickets of the prices. Confectionery to be done out of the house. Fruiterers, market-men, as butchers and poulterers. The Agent's *maître d'hôtel* will give a receipt to each individual for the articles he produces; and let all remember that the Agent is a *very keen judge*, and woe betide those who serve him or his clients ill!

"George Gormand Gobbleton.

"*Carlton Gardens, June* 10, 1842."

Here I have sketched out the heads of such an address as I conceive a gastronomic agent might put forth; and appeal pretty confidently to the British public regarding its merits and my own discovery. If this be not a profession—a new one—a feasible one—a lucrative one—I don't know what is. Say that a man attends but fifteen dinners daily, that is seventy-five guineas, or five hundred and fifty pounds weekly, or fourteen thousand three hundred pounds for a season of six months: and how many of our younger sons have such a capital even? Let, then, some unemployed gentleman with the requisite qualifications come forward. It will not be necessary that he should have done all that is stated in the prospectus; but, at any rate, let him *say* he has: there can't be much harm in an innocent fib of that sort; for the gastronomic agent must be a sort of dinner-pope, whose opinions cannot be supposed to err.

And as he really will be an excellent judge of eating and drinking, and will bring his whole mind to bear upon the question, and will speedily acquire an experience which no person out of the profession can possibly have; and as, moreover, he will be an honourable man, not practising upon his client in any way, or demanding sixpence beyond his just fee, the world will gain vastly by the coming forward of such a person—gain in good dinners, and absolutely save money: for what is five guineas for a dinner of sixteen? The sum may be *gaspillé* by a cook-wench, or by one of those abominable before-named pastrycooks with their green trays.

If any man take up the business, he will invite me, of course, to the Monday dinners. Or does ingratitude go so far as that a man should forget the author of his good fortune? I believe it does. Turn we away from the sickening theme!

And now, having concluded my professions, how shall I express my obligations to the discriminating press of this country for the unanimous applause which hailed my first appearance? It is the more wonderful, as I pledge my sacred word, I never wrote a document be-

fore much longer than a laundress's bill, or the acceptance of an invitation to dinner. But enough of this egotism: thanks for praise conferred sound like vanity; gratitude is hard to speak of, and at present it swells the full heart of

GEORGE SAVAGE FITZ-BOODLE.

ROUNDABOUT PAPERS

[The three rambling essays which follow can be classed under one head. They were all contributed to the *Cornhill Magazine* during Thackeray's editorship or that of his immediate successor, under the title of *Roundabout Papers*. They are of some importance to Thackeray's fame, because some critics when reading his novels have said that the stories would be all very well without the digressions. Here he makes a whole book out of the digressions alone; and it is one of his best.]

ON A CHALK-MARK ON THE DOOR

On the doorpost of the house of a friend of mine, a few inches above the lock, is a little chalk-mark, which some sportive boy in passing has probably scratched on the pillar. The door-steps, the lock, handle, and so forth, are kept decently enough; but this chalk-mark, I suppose some three inches out of the housemaid's beat, has already been on the door for more than a fortnight, and I wonder whether it will be there whilst this paper is being written, whilst it is at the printer's, and, in fine, until the month passes over? I wonder whether the servants in that house will read these remarks about the chalk-mark? That the *Cornhill Magazine* is taken in in that house I know. In fact I have seen it there. In fact I have read it there. In fact I have written it there. In a word, the house to which I allude is mine—the "editor's private residence," to which, in spite of prayers, entreaties, commands, and threats, authors, and ladies especially, *will* send their communications, although they won't understand that they injure their own interests by so doing; for how is a man who has his own work to do, his own exquisite inventions to

form and perfect—Maria to rescue from the unprincipled Earl—the atrocious General to confound in his own machinations—the angelic Dean to promote to a bishopric, and so forth—how is a man to do all this, under a hundred interruptions, and keep his nerves and temper in that just and equable state in which they ought to be when he comes to assume the critical office? As you will send here, ladies, I must tell you you have a much worse chance than if you forward your valuable articles to Cornhill. Here your papers arrive, at dinner-time, we will say. Do you suppose that is a pleasant period, and that we are to criticise you between the *ovum* and *malum*, between the soup and the dessert? I have touched, I think, on this subject before. I say again, if you want real justice shown you, don't send your papers to the private residence. At home, for instance, yesterday, having given strict orders that I was to receive nobody, "except on business," do you suppose a smiling young Scottish gentleman, who forced himself into my study, and there announced himself as agent of a Cattle-food Company, was received with pleasure? There, as I sat in my arm-chair, suppose he had proposed to draw a couple of my teeth, would I have been pleased? I could have throttled that agent. I daresay the whole of that day's work will be found tinged with a ferocious misanthropy, occasioned by my clever young friend's intrusion. Cattle-food, indeed! As if beans, oats, warm mashes, and a ball, are to be pushed down a man's throat just as he is meditating on the great social problem, or (for I think it was my epic I was going to touch up) just as he was about to soar to the height of the empyrean!

Having got my cattle-agent out of the door, I resume my consideration of that little mark on the doorpost, which is scored up as the text of the present little sermon; and which I hope will relate, not to chalk, nor to any of its special uses or abuses (such as milk, neck-powder, and the like), but to servants. Surely ours might remove that unseemly little mark. Suppose it were on my coat, might I not request its removal? I

remember, when I was at school, a little careless boy, upon whose forehead an ink-mark remained, and was perfectly recognizable for three weeks after its first appearance. May I take any notice of this chalk-stain on the forehead of my house? Whose business is it to wash that forehead? and ought I to fetch a brush and a little hot water, and wash it off myself?

Yes. But that spot removed, why not come down at six, and wash the doorsteps? I daresay the early rising and exercise would do me a great deal of good. The housemaid, in that case, might lie in bed a little later, and have her tea and the morning paper brought to her in bed: then, of course, Thomas would expect to be helped about the boots and knives; cook about the saucepans, dishes, and what not; the lady's-maid would want somebody to take the curl-papers out of her hair, and get her bath ready. You should have a set of servants for the servants, and these under-servants should have slaves to wait on them. The king commands the first lord in waiting to desire the second lord to intimate to the gentleman usher to request a page of the ante-chamber to entreat the groom of the stair to implore John to ask the captain of the buttons to desire the maid of the still-room to beg the housekeeper to give out a few more lumps of sugar, as his Majesty has none for his coffee, which probably is getting cold during the negotiation. In our little Brentfords we are all kings, more or less. There are orders, gradations, hierarchies, everywhere. In your house and mine there are mysteries unknown to us. I am not going into the horrid old question of "followers." I don't mean cousins from the country, love-stricken policemen, or gentlemen in mufti from Knightsbridge Barracks; but people who have an occult right on the premises; the uncovenanted servants of the house; grey women who are seen at evening with baskets flitting about area-railings; dingy shawls which drop you furtive curtsies in your neighbourhood; demure little Jacks, who start up from behind boxes in the pantry. Those outsiders wear Thomas's crest and livery, and call him "Sir;" those silent women address

the female servants as "Mum," and curtsey before them, squaring their arms over their wretched lean aprons. Then again, those *servi servorum* have dependents in the vast, silent, poverty-stricken world outside your comfortable kitchen fire, in the world of darkness, and hunger, and miserable cold, and dank, flagged cellars, and huddled straw, and rags, in which pale children are swarming. It may be your beer (which runs with great volubility) has a pipe or two which communicates with those dark caverns where hopeless anguish pours the groan, and would scarce see light but for a scrap or two of candle which has long been whipped away from your worship's kitchen. Not many years ago—I don't know whether before or since that white mark was drawn on the door—a lady occupied the confidential place of housemaid in this "private residence," who brought a good character, who seemed to have a cheerful temper, whom I used to hear clattering and bumping overhead or on the stairs long before daylight —there, I say, was poor Camilla, scouring the plain, trundling and brushing, and clattering with her pans and brooms, and humming at her work. Well, she had established a smuggling communication of beer over the area frontier. This neat-handed Phyllis used to pack up the nicest baskets of my provender, and convey them to somebody outside—I believe, on my conscience, to some poor friend in distress. Camilla was consigned to her doom. She was sent back to her friends in the country; and when she was gone we heard of many of her faults. She expressed herself, when displeased, in language that I shall not repeat. As for the beer and meat, there was no mistake about them. But *après*? Can I have the heart to be very angry with that poor jade for helping another poorer jade out of my larder? On your honour and conscience, when you were a boy, and the apples looked temptingly over Farmer Quarringdon's hedge, did you never ——? When there was a grand dinner at home, and you were sliding, with Master Bacon, up and down the stairs, and the dishes came out, did you ever do such a thing as just to ——? Well, in many and many a

respect servants are like children. They are under domination. They are subject to reproof, to ill-temper, to petty exactions and stupid tyrannies not seldom. They scheme, conspire, fawn, and are hypocrites. "Little boys should not loll on chairs." "Little girls should be seen and not heard;" and so forth. Have we not almost all learnt these expressions of old foozles: and uttered them ourselves when in the square-toed state? The Eton master, who was breaking a lance with our Paterfamilias of late, turned on Paterfamilias, saying, He knows not the nature and exquisite candour of well-bred English boys. Exquisite fiddlestick's end, Mr. Master! Do you mean for to go for to tell us that the relations between young gentlemen and their schoolmasters are entirely frank and cordial; that the lad is familiar with the man who can have him flogged; never shirks his exercises; never gets other boys to do his verses; never does other boys' verses; never breaks bounds; never tells fibs—I mean the fibs permitted by scholastic honour? Did I know of a boy who pretended to such a character, I would forbid my scapegraces to keep company with him. Did I know a schoolmaster who pretended to believe in the existence of many hundred such boys in one school at one time, I would set that man down as a baby in knowledge of the world. "Who was making that noise?" "I don't know, sir."—And he knows it was the boy next him in school. "Who was climbing over that wall?" "I don't know, sir." And it is in the speaker's own trousers, very likely, the glass bottle-tops have left their cruel scars. And so with servants. "Who ate up the three pigeons which went down in the pigeon-pie at breakfast this morning?" "Oh dear me! sir, it was John, who went away last month!"—or, "I think it was Miss Mary's canary-bird, which got out of the cage, and is so fond of pigeons, it never can have enough of them." Yes, it *was* the canary-bird; and Eliza saw it; and Eliza is ready to vow she did. These statements are not true; but please don't call them lies. This is not lying; this is voting with your party. You *must* back your own side. The servants'-hall stands by

the servants'-hall against the dining-room. The schoolboys don't tell tales of each other. They agree not to choose to know who has made the noise, who has broken the window, who has eaten up the pigeons, who has picked all the plovers'-eggs out of the aspic, how it is that liqueur brandy of Gledstane's is in such porous glass-bottles—and so forth. Suppose Brutus had a footman, who came and told him that the butler drank the curaçoa, which of these servants would you dismiss?—the butler, perhaps, but the footman certainly.

No. If your plate and glass are beautifully bright, your bell quickly answered, and Thomas ready, neat, and good-humoured, you are not to expect absolute truth from him. The very obsequiousness and perfection of his service prevents truth. He may be ever so unwell in mind or body, and he must go through his service—hand the shining plate, replenish the spotless glass, lay the glittering fork—never laugh when you yourself or your guests joke—be profoundly attentive, and yet look utterly impassive—exchange a few hurried curses at the door with that unseen slavey who ministers without, and with you be perfectly calm and polite. If you are ill, he will come twenty times in an hour to your bell; or leave the girl of his heart—his mother, who is going to America—his dearest friend, who has come to say farewell—his lunch, and his glass of beer just freshly poured out—any or all of these, if the door-bell rings, or the master calls out "THOMAS" from the hall. Do you suppose you can expect absolute candour from a man whom you may order to powder his hair? As between the Reverend Henry Holyshade and his pupil, the idea of entire unreserve is utter bosh; so the truth as between you and Jeames or Thomas, or Mary the housemaid, or Betty the cook, is relative, and not to be demanded on one side or the other. Why, respectful civility is itself a lie, which poor Jeames often has to utter or perform to many a swaggering vulgarian, who should black Jeames's boots, did Jeames wear them and not shoes. There is your little Tom, just ten, ordering the great, large, quiet, orderly young man about—

shrieking calls for hot water—bullying Jeames because the boots are not varnished enough, or ordering him to go to the stables, and ask Jenkins why the deuce Tomkins hasn't brought his pony round—or what you will. There is mamma rapping the knuckles of Pincot the lady's-maid, and little Miss scolding Martha, who waits up five pair of stairs in the nursery. Little Miss, Tommy, papa, mamma, you all expect from Martha, from Pincot, from Jenkins, from Jeames, obsequious civility and willing service. My dear, good people, you can't have truth too. Suppose you ask for your newspaper, and Jeames says, "I'm reading it, and jest beg not to be disturbed;" or suppose you ask for a can of water, and he remarks, "You great, big, 'ulking fellar, ain't you big enough to bring it hup yoursulf?" what would your feelings be? Now, if you made similar proposals or requests to Mr. Jones next door, this is the kind of answer Jones would give you. You get truth habitually from equals only: so my good Mr. Holyshade, don't talk to me about the habitual candour of the young Etonian of high birth, or I have my own opinion of *your* candour or discernment when you do. No. Tom Bowling is the soul of honour and has been true to Black-eyed Syousan since the last time they parted at Wapping Old Stairs; but do you suppose Tom is perfectly frank, familiar, and above-board in his conversation with Admiral Nelson, K.C.B.? There are secrets, prevarications, fibs, if you will, between Tom and the Admiral—between your crew and *their* captain. I know I hire a worthy, clean, agreeable, and conscientious male or female hypocrite, at so many guineas a year, to do so and so for me. Were he other than hypocrite I would send him about his business. Don't let my displeasure be too fierce with him for a fib or two on his own account.

Some dozen years ago, my family being absent in a distant part of the country, and my business detaining me in London, I remained in my own house with three servants on board wages. I used only to breakfast at home; and future ages will be interested to know that

this meal used to consist, at that period, of tea, a penny roll, a pat of butter, and, perhaps, an egg. My weekly bill used invariably to be about fifty shillings; so that, as I never dined in the house, you see, my breakfast, consisting of the delicacies before mentioned, cost about seven shillings and threepence per diem. I must, therefore, have consumed daily—

	s.	*d.*
A quarter of a pound of tea (say)	1	3
A penny roll (say)	1	0
One pound of butter (say)	1	3
One pound of lump sugar	1	0
A new-laid egg	2	9

Which is the only possible way I have for making out the sum.

Well, I fell ill while under this regimen, and had an illness which, but for a certain doctor, who was brought to me by a certain kind friend I had in those days, would, I think, have prevented the possibility of my telling this interesting anecdote now a dozen years after. Don't be frightened, my dear madam; it is not a horrid, sentimental account of a malady you are coming to—only a question of grocery. This illness, I say, lasted some seventeen days, during which the servants were admirably attentive and kind; and poor John, especially, was up at all hours, watching night after night—amiable, cheerful, untiring, respectful, the very best of Johns and nurses.

Twice or thrice in the seventeen days I may have had a glass of *eau sucrée*—say a dozen glasses of *eau sucrée*—certainly not more. Well, this admirable, watchful, cheerful, tender, affectionate John brought me in a little bill for seventeen pounds of sugar consumed during the illness—"Often 'ad sugar and water; always was a-callin' for it," says John, wagging his head quite gravely. You are dead, years and years ago, poor John—so patient, so friendly, so kind, so cheerful to the invalid in the fever. But confess, now, wherever you are, that seventeen pounds of sugar to make six glasses of *eau sucrée* was a *little* too strong, wasn't it, John?

Ah, how frankly, how trustily, how bravely he lied, poor John! One evening, being at Brighton, in the convalescence, I remember John's step was unsteady, his voice thick, his laugh queer—and having some quinine to give me, John brought the glass to me—not to my mouth, but struck me with it pretty smartly in the eye, which was not the way in which Dr. Elliotson had intended his prescription should be taken. Turning that eye upon him, I ventured to hint that my attendant had been drinking. Drinking! I never was more humiliated at the thought of my own injustice than at John's reply. "Drinking! S'ulp me! I have had on'y one pint of beer with my dinner at one o'clock!"—and he retreats, holding on by a chair. These are fibs, you see, appertaining to the situation. John is drunk. "*S'ulp* him, he has only had an 'alf-pint of beer with his dinner six hours ago;" and none of his fellow-servants will say otherwise. Polly is smuggled on board ship. Who tells the lieutenant when he comes his rounds? Boys are playing cards in the bedroom. The outlying fag announces master coming—out go candles—cards popped into bed—boys sound asleep. Who had that light in the dormitory? Law bless you! the poor dear innocents are every one snoring. Every one snoring, and every snore is a lie told through the nose! Suppose one of your boys or mine is engaged in that awful crime, are we going to break our hearts about it? Come, come. We pull a long face, waggle a grave head, and chuckle within our waistcoats.

Between me and those fellow-creatures of mine who are sitting in the room below, how strange and wonderful is the partition! We meet at every hour of the daylight, and are indebted to each other for a hundred offices of duty and comfort of life; and we live together for years, and don't know each other. John's voice to me is quite different from John's voice when it addresses his mates below. If I met Hannah in the street with a bonnet on, I doubt whether I should know her. And all these good people with whom I may live for years and years, have cares, interests, dear friends and

relatives, mayhap schemes, passions, longing hopes, tragedies of their own, from which a carpet and a few planks and beams utterly separate me. When we were at the seaside, and poor Ellen used to look so pale, and run after the postman's bell, and seize a letter in a great scrawling hand, and read it, and cry in a corner, how should we know that the poor little thing's heart was breaking? She fetched the water, and she smoothed the ribbons, and she laid out the dresses, and brought the early cup of tea in the morning, just as if she had had no cares to keep her awake. Henry (who lived out of the house) was the servant of a friend of mine who lived in chambers. There was a dinner one day, and Henry waited all through the dinner. The champagne was properly iced, the dinner was excellently served; every guest was attended to; the dinner disappeared; the dessert was set; the claret was in perfect order, carefully decanted, and more ready. And then Henry said, "If you please, sir, may I go home?" He had received word that his house was on fire; and, having seen through his dinner, he wished to go and look after his children, and little sticks of furniture. Why, such a man's livery is a uniform of honour. The crest on his button is a badge of bravery.

Do you see—I imagine I do myself—in these little instances, a tinge of humour? Ellen's heart is breaking for handsome Jeames of Buckley Square, whose great legs are kneeling, and who has given a lock of his precious powdered head, to some other than Ellen. Henry is preparing the sauce for his master's wild ducks while the engines are squirting over his own little nest and brood. Lift these figures up but a storey from the basement to the ground-floor, and the fun is gone. We may be *en pleine tragédie*. Ellen may breathe her last sigh in blank verse, calling down blessings upon James the profligate who deserts her. Henry is a hero, and epaulettes are on his shoulders. *Atqui sciebat*, etc., whatever tortures are in store for him, he will be at his post of duty.

You concede, however, that there is a touch of humour

in the two tragedies here mentioned. Why? Is it that the idea of persons at service is somehow ludicrous? Perhaps it is made more so in this country by the splendid appearance of the liveried domestics of great people. When you think that we dress in black ourselves, and put our fellow-creatures in green, pink, or canary-coloured breeches; that we order them to plaster their hair with flour, having brushed that nonsense out of our own heads fifty years ago; that some of the most genteel and stately among us cause the men who drive their carriages to put on little Albino wigs, and sit behind great nosegays—I say I suppose it is this heaping of gold lace, gaudy colours, blooming plushes, on honest John Trot, which makes the man absurd in our eyes, who need be nothing but a simple reputable citizen and in-door labourer. Suppose, my dear sir, that you yourself were suddenly desired to put on a full dress, or even undress, domestic uniform with our friend Jones's crest repeated in varied combinations of button on your front and back? Suppose, madam, your son were told, that he could not get out except in lower garments of carnation or amber-coloured plush—would you let him? . . . But as you justly say, this is not the question, and besides it is a question fraught with danger, sir; and radicalism, sir; and subversion of the very foundations of the social fabric, sir. . . . Well, John, we won't enter on your great domestic question. Don't let us disport with Jeames's dangerous strength, and the edge-tools about his knife-board; but with Betty and Susan who wield the playful mop, and set on the simmering kettle. Surely you have heard Mrs. Toddles talking to Mrs. Doddles about their mutual maids. Miss Susan must have a silk gown, and Miss Betty must wear flowers under her bonnet when she goes to church if you please, and did you ever hear such impudence? The servant in many small establishments is a constant and endless theme of talk. What small wage, sleep, meal, what endless scouring, scolding, tramping on messages fall to that poor Susan's lot; what indignation at the little kindly passing word with the grocer's young

man, the pot-boy, the chubby butcher! Where such things will end, my dear Mrs. Toddles, I don't know. What wages they will want next, my dear Mrs. Doddles, etc.

Here, dear ladies, is an advertisement which I cut out of the *Times* a few days since, expressly for you:

"A LADY is desirous of obtaining a SITUATION for a very respectable young woman as HEAD KITCHEN-MAID under a man-cook. She has lived four years under a very good cook and housekeeper. Can make ice, and is an excellent baker. She will only take a place in a very good family, where she can have the opportunity of improving herself, and, if possible, staying for two years. Apply by letter to," etc. etc.

There, Mrs. Toddles, what do you think of that, and did you ever? Well, no, Mrs. Doddles. Upon my word now, Mrs. T., I don't think I ever did. A respectable young woman—as head kitchen-maid—under a man-cook, will only take a place in a very good family, where she can improve, and stay two years. Just note up the conditions, Mrs. Toddles, mum, if you please, mum, and *then* let us see:—

1. This young woman is to be HEAD kitchen-maid, that is to say, there is to be a chorus of kitchen-maids, of which Y. W. is to be chief.

2. She will only be situated under a man-cook. (A) Ought he to be a French cook; and (B), if so, would the lady desire him to be a Protestant?

3. She will only take a place in a *very good family*. How old ought the family to be, and what do you call good? that is the question. How long after the Conquest will do? Would a banker's family do, or is a baronet's good enough? Best say what rank in the peerage would be sufficiently high. But the lady does not say whether she would like a High Church or a Low Church family. Ought there to be unmarried sons, and may they follow a profession? and please say how many daughters; and would the lady like them to be musical? And

how many company dinners a week? Not too many, for fear of fatiguing the upper kitchen-maid; but sufficient, so as to keep the upper kitchen-maid's hand in. [N.B.—I think I can see a rather bewildered expression on the countenances of Mesdames Doddles and Toddles as I am prattling on in this easy bantering way.]

4. The head kitchen-maid wishes to stay for two years, and improve herself under the man-cook, and having of course sucked the brains (as the phrase is) from under the chef's nightcap, then the head kitchen-maid wishes to go.

And upon my word, Mrs. Toddles, mum, I will go and fetch the cab for her. The cab? Why not her ladyship's own carriage and pair, and the head coachman to drive away the head kitchen-maid? You see she stipulates for everything—the time to come; the time to stay; the family she will be with; and as soon as she has improved herself enough, of course the upper kitchen-maid will step into the carriage and drive off.

Well, upon my word and conscience, if things are coming to *this* pass, Mrs. Toddles and Mrs. Doddles, mum, I think I will go upstairs and get a basin and a sponge, and then downstairs and get some hot water; and then I will go and scrub that chalk-mark off my own door with my own hands.

It is wiped off, I declare! After ever so many weeks! Who has done it! It was just a little round-about mark, you know, and it was there for days and weeks, before I ever thought it would be the text of a Roundabout Paper.

AUTOUR DE MON CHAPEAU.

Never have I seen a more noble tragic face. In the centre of the forehead there was a great furrow of care, towards which the brows rose piteously. What a deep solemn grief in the eyes! They looked blankly at the

object before them, but through it, as it were, and into the grief beyond. In moments of pain, have you not looked at some indifferent object so? It mingles dumbly with your grief, and remains afterwards connected with it in your mind. It may be some indifferent thing—a book which you were reading at the time when you received her farewell letter (how well you remember the paragraph afterwards—the shape of the words, and their position on the page); the words you were writing when your mother came in, and said it was all over—she was MARRIED—Emily married—to that insignificant little rival at whom you have laughed a hundred times in her company. Well, well; my friend and reader, whoe'er you be—old man or young, wife or maiden—you have had your grief-pang. Boy, you have lain awake the first night at school, and thought of home. Worse still, man, you have parted from the dear ones with bursting heart; and, lonely boy, recall the bolstering an unfeeling comrade gave you; and, lonely man, just torn from your children—their little tokens of affection yet in your pocket—pacing the deck at evening in the midst of the roaring ocean, you can remember how you were told that supper was ready, and how you went down to the cabin and had brandy-and-water and biscuit. You remember the taste of them. Yes; for ever. You took them whilst you and your Grief were sitting together, and your Grief clutched you round the soul. Serpent, how you have writhed round me, and bitten me! Remorse, Remembrance, etc., come in the night season, and I feel you gnawing, gnawing! . . . I tell you that man's face was like Laocoon's (which, by the way, I always think over-rated. The real head is at Brussels, at the Duke Daremberg's, not at Rome).

That man! What man? That man of whom I said that his magnificent countenance exhibited the noblest tragic woe. He was not of European blood. He was handsome, but not of European beauty. His face white —not of a Northern whiteness; his eyes protruding somewhat, and rolling in their grief. Those eyes had seen the Orient sun, and his beak was the eagle's. His

lips were full. The beard, curling round them, was unkempt and tawny. The locks were of a deep, deep coppery red. The hands, swart and powerful, accustomed to the rough grasp of the wares in which he dealt, seemed unused to the flimsy artifices of the bath. He came from the Wilderness, and its sands were on his robe, his cheek, his tattered sandal, and the hardy foot it covered.

And his grief—whence came his sorrow? I will tell you. He bore it in his hand. He had evidently just concluded the compact by which it became his. His business was that of a purchaser of domestic raiment. At early dawn—nay, at what hour when the city is alive—do we not all hear the nasal cry of "Clo'"? In Paris, *Habits, Galons, Marchand d'habits*, is the twanging signal with which the wandering merchant makes his presence known. It was in Paris I saw this man. Where else have I not seen him? In the Roman Ghetto—at the Gate of David, in his fathers' once imperial city. The man I mean was an itinerant vendor and purchaser of wardrobes—what you call an . . . Enough! You know his name.

On his left shoulder hung his bag; and he held in that hand a white hat, which I am sure he had just purchased, and which was the cause of the grief which smote his noble features. Of course I cannot particularize the sum, but he had given too much for that hat. He felt he might have got the thing for less money. It was not the amount, I am sure; it was the principle involved. He had given fourpence (let us say) for that which threepence would have purchased. He had been done: and a manly shame was upon him, that he, whose energy, acuteness, experience, point of honour, should have made him the victor in any mercantile duel in which he should engage, had been overcome by a porter's wife, who very likely sold him the old hat, or by a student who was tired of it. I can understand his grief. Do I seem to be speaking of it in a disrespectful or flippant way? Then you mistake me. He had been outwitted. He had desired, coaxed, schemed, haggled, got what he wanted, and now found he had paid too much for his

bargain. You don't suppose I would ask you to laugh at that man's grief? It is you, clumsy cynic, who are disposed to sneer, whilst it may be tears of genuine sympathy are trickling down this nose of mine. What do you mean by laughing? If you saw a wounded soldier on the field of battle, would you laugh? If you saw a ewe robbed of her lamb, would you laugh, you brute? It is you who are the cynic, and have no feeling: and you sneer because that grief is unintelligible to you which touches my finer sensibility. The OLD-CLOTHES'-MAN had been defeated in one of the daily battles of his most interesting, chequered, adventurous life.

Have you ever figured to yourself what such a life must be? The pursuit and conquest of twopence must be the most eager and fascinating of occupations. We might all engage in that business if we would. Do not whist-players, for example, toil, and think, and lose their temper over sixpenny points? They bring study, natural genius, long forethought, memory, and careful historical experience to bear upon their favourite labour. Don't tell me that it is the sixpenny points, and five shillings the rub, which keeps them for hours over their painted pasteboard. It is the desire to conquer. Hours pass by. Night glooms. Dawn, it may be, rises unheeded; and they sit calling for fresh cards at the "Portland," or the "Union," while waning candles splutter in the sockets, and languid waiters snooze in the ante-room. Sol rises. Jones has lost four pounds: Brown has won two; Robinson lurks away to his family house and (mayhap indignant) Mrs. R. Hours of evening, night, morning, have passed away whilst they have been waging this sixpenny battle. What is the loss of four pounds to Jones, the gain of two to Brown? B. is, perhaps, so rich that two pounds more or less are as naught to him; J. is so hopelessly involved that to win four pounds cannot benefit his creditors, or alter his condition; but they play for that stake: they put forward their best energies: they ruff, finesse (what are the technical words, and how do I know?) It is but a sixpenny game if you like; but they want to win it. So as regards my

friend yonder with the hat. He stakes his money: he wishes to win the game, not the hat merely. I am not prepared to say that he is not inspired by a noble ambition. Caesar wished to be first in a village. If first of a hundred yokels, why not first of two? And my friend the old-clothes'-man wishes to win his game, as well as to turn his little sixpence.

Suppose in the game of life—and it is but a twopenny game after all—you are equally eager of winning. Shall you be ashamed of your ambition, or glory in it? There are games, too, which are becoming to particular periods of life. I remember in the days of our youth, when my friend Arthur Bowler was an eminent cricketer. Slim, swift, strong, well-built, he presented a goodly appearance on the ground in his flannel uniform. *Militâsti non sine gloria*, Bowler my boy! Hush! We tell no tales. Mum is the word. Yonder comes Charley his son. Now Charley his son has taken the field, and is famous among the eleven of his school. Bowler senior, with his capacious waistcoat, etc., waddling after a ball, would present an absurd object, whereas it does the eyes good to see Bowler junior scouring the plain—a young exemplar of joyful health, vigour, activity. The old boy wisely contents himself with amusements more becoming his age and waist; takes his sober ride; visits his farm soberly—busies himself about his pigs, his ploughing, his peaches, or what not? Very small *routinier* amusements interest him; and (thank goodness!) nature provides very kindly for kindly-disposed fogies. We relish those things which we scorned in our lusty youth. I see the young folks of an evening kindling and glowing over their delicious novels. I look up and watch the eager eye flashing down the page, being, for my part, perfectly contented with my twaddling old volume of *Howel's Letters* or the *Gentleman's Magazine*. I am actually arrived at such a calm frame of mind that I like batter-pudding. I never should have believed it possible; but it is so. Yet a little while, and I may relish water-gruel. It will be the age of *mon lait de poule et mon bonnet de nuit*. And then—the cotton extinguisher is

pulled over the old noddle, and the little flame of life is popped out.

Don't you know elderly people who make learned notes in Army Lists, Peerages, and the like? This is the batter-pudding, water-gruel of old age. The worn-out old digestion does not care for stronger food. Formerly it could swallow twelve-hours' tough reading, and digest an encyclopædia.

If I had children to educate, I would, at ten or twelve years of age, have a professor, or professoress, of whist for them, and cause them to be well grounded in that great and useful game. You cannot learn it well when you are old, any more than you can learn dancing or billiards. In our house at home we youngsters did not play whist because we were dear obedient children, and the elders said playing at cards was "a waste of time." A waste of time, my good people! *Allons!* What do elderly home-keeping people do of a night after dinner? Darby gets his newspaper; my dear Joan her *Missionary Magazine* or her volume of Cumming's Sermons—and don't you know what ensues? Over the arm of Darby's arm-chair the paper flutters to the ground unheeded, and he performs the trumpet obbligato *que vous savez* on his old nose. My dear old Joan's head nods over her sermon (awakening though the doctrine may be). Ding, ding, ding: can that be ten o'clock? It is time to send the servants to bed, my dear—and to bed master and mistress go too. But they have not wasted their time playing at cards. Oh, no! I belong to a Club where there is whist of a night; and not a little amusing is it to hear Brown speak of Thompson's play, and *vice versâ*. But there is one man—Greatorex let us call him—who is the acknowledged captain and primus of all the whist-players. We all secretly admire him. I, for my part, watch him in private life, hearken to what he says, note what he orders for dinner, and have that feeling of awe for him that I used to have as a boy for the cock of the school. Not play at whist? "*Quelle triste vieillesse vous vous préparez!*" were the words of the great and good Bishop of Autun. I can't. It is too late now. Too late!

too late! Ah! humiliating confession! That joy might have been clutched, but the life-stream has swept us by it—the swift life-stream rushing to the nearing sea. Too late! too late! Twentystone my boy! When you read in the papers "Valse à deux temps," and all the fashionable dances taught to adults by "Miss Lightfoots," don't you feel that you would like to go in and learn? Ah, it is too late! You have passed the *choreas*, Master Twentystone, and the young people are dancing without you.

I don't believe much of what my Lord Byron the poet says; but when he wrote, "So, for a good old gentlemanly vice, I think I shall put up with avarice," I think his lordship meant what he wrote, and if he practised what he preached, shall not quarrel with him. As an occupation in declining years, I declare I think saving is useful, amusing, and not unbecoming. It must be a perpetual amusement. It is a game that can be played by day, by night, at home and abroad, and at which you must win in the long run. I am tired and want a cab. The fare to my house, say, is two shillings. The cabman will naturally want half-a-crown. I pull out my book. I show him the distance is exactly three miles and fifteen hundred and ninety yards. I offer him my card—my winning card. As he retires with the two shillings, blaspheming inwardly, every curse is a compliment to my skill. I have played him and beat him; and a sixpence is my spoil and just reward. This is a game, by the way, which women play far more cleverly than we do. But what an interest it imparts to life! During the whole drive home I know I shall have my game at the journey's end; am sure of my hand, and shall beat my adversary. Or I can play in another way. I won't have a cab at all, I will wait for the omnibus: I will be one of the damp fourteen in that steaming vehicle. I will wait about in the rain for an hour, and 'bus after 'bus shall pass, but I will not be beat. I *will* have a place, and get it at length, with my boots wet through, and an umbrella dripping between my legs. I have a rheumatism, a cold, a sore throat, a sulky evening—a doctor's

bill to-morrow perhaps? Yes, but I have won my game, and am a gainer of a shilling on this rubber.

If you play this game all through life it is wonderful what daily interest it has, and amusing occupation. For instance, my wife goes to sleep after dinner over her volume of sermons. As soon as the dear soul is sound asleep, I advance softly and puff out her candle. Her pure dreams will be all the happier without that light; and, say she sleeps an hour, there is a penny gained.

As for clothes, *parbleu!* there is not much money to be saved in clothes, for the fact is, as a man advances in life—as he becomes an *Ancient Briton* (mark the pleasantry)—he goes without clothes. When my tailor proposes something in the way of a change of raiment, I laugh in his face. My blue coat and brass buttons will last these ten years. It is seedy? What then? I don't want to charm any body in particular. You say that my clothes are shabby? What do I care? When I wished to look well in somebody's eyes, the matter may have been different. But now, when I receive my bill of £10 (let us say) at the year's end, and contrast it with old tailors' reckonings, I feel that I have played the game with master tailor, and beat him; and my old clothes are a token of the victory.

I do not like to give servants board wages, though they are cheaper than household bills; but I know they save out of board wages; and so beat me. This shows that it is not the money but the game which interests me. So about wine. I have it good and dear. I will trouble you to tell me where to get it good and cheap. You may as well give me the address of a shop where I can buy meat for fourpence a pound, or sovereigns for fifteen shillings apiece. At the game of auctions, docks, shy wine-merchants, depend on it there is *no* winning; and I would as soon think of buying jewellery at an auction in Fleet Street as of purchasing wine from one of your dreadful needy wine-agents such as infest every man's door. Grudge myself good wine? As soon grudge my horse corn. *Merci!* that would be a very losing game indeed, and your humble servant has no relish for such.

But in the very pursuit of saving there must be a hundred harmless delights and pleasures which we who are careless necessarily forego. What do you know about the natural history of your household? Upon your honour and conscience, do you know the price of a pound of butter? Can you say what sugar costs, and how much your family consumes and ought to consume? How much lard do you use in your house? As I think on these subjects I own I hang down the head of shame. I suppose for a moment that you, who are reading this, are a middle-aged gentleman, and paterfamilias. Can you answer the above questions? You know, sir, you cannot. Now turn round, lay down the book, and suddenly ask Mrs. Jones and your daughters if *they* can answer? They cannot. They look at one another. They pretend they can answer. They can tell you the plot and principal characters of the last novel. Some of them know something about history, geology, and so forth. But of the natural history of home—*Nichts*, and for shame on you all! *Honnis soyez!* For shame on you? for shame on us!

In the early morning I hear a sort of call or *jodel* under my window: and know 'tis the matutinal milkman leaving his can at my gate. O household gods! have I lived all these years and don't know the price or the quantity of the milk which is delivered in that can? Why don't I know? As I live, if I live till to-morrow morning, as soon as I hear the call of Lactantius, I will dash out upon him. How many cows? How much milk, on an average, all the year round? What rent? What cost of food and dairy servants? What loss of animals, and average cost of purchase? If I interested myself properly about my pint (or hogshead, whatever it be) of milk, all this knowledge would ensue; all this additional interest in life. What is this talk of my friend, Mr. Lewes, about objects at the seaside, and so forth?[1] Objects at the seaside? Objects at the area-bell: objects before my nose: objects which the butcher

[1] *Seaside Studies.* By G. H. Lewes.

brings me in his tray: which the cook dresses and puts down before me, and over which I say grace! My daily life is surrounded with objects which ought to interest me. The pudding I eat (or refuse, that is neither here nor there: and, between ourselves, what I have said about batter-pudding may be taken *cum grano*—we are not come to *that* yet, except for the sake of argument or illustration)—the pudding, I say, on my plate, the eggs that made it, the fire that cooked it, the tablecloth on which it is laid, and so forth—are each and all of these objects a knowledge of which I may acquire—a knowledge of the cost and production of which I might advantageously learn? To the man who *does* know these things, I say the interest of life is prodigiously increased. The milkman becomes a study to him; the baker a being he curiously and tenderly examines. Go, Lewes, and clap a hideous sea-anemone into a glass: I will put a cabman under mine, and make a vivisection of a butcher. O Lares, Penates, and gentle household gods, teach me to sympathize with all that comes within my doors! Give me an interest in the butcher's book. Let me look forward to the ensuing number of the grocer's account with eagerness. It seems ungrateful to my kitchen-chimney not to know the cost of sweeping it; and I trust that many a man who reads this, and muses on it, will feel, like the writer, ashamed of himself, and hang down his head humbly.

Now, if to this household game you could add a little money interest, the amusement would be increased far beyond the mere money value, as a game at cards for sixpence is better than a rubber for nothing. If you can interest yourself about sixpence, all life is invested with a new excitement. From sunrise to sleeping you can always be playing that game—with butcher, baker, coal-merchant, cabman, omnibus-man—nay, diamond-merchant and stockbroker. You can bargain for a guinea over the price of a diamond necklace, or for a sixteenth per cent. in a transaction at the Stock Exchange. We all know men who have this faculty who are not ungenerous with their money. They give it on great occa-

sions. They are more able to help than you and I who spend ours, and say to poor Prodigal who comes to us out at elbow, "My dear fellow, I should have been delighted: but I have already anticipated my quarter, and am going to ask Screwby if he can do anything for me."

In this delightful, wholesome, ever-novel twopenny game, there is a danger of excess, as there is in every other pastime or occupation of life. If you grow too eager for your twopence, the acquisition or the loss of it may affect your peace of mind, and peace of mind is better than any amount of twopences. My friend, the old-clothes'-man, whose agonies over the hat have led to this rambling disquisition, has, I very much fear, by a too eager pursuit of small profits, disturbed the equanimity of a mind that ought to be easy and happy. "Had I stood out," he thinks, "I might have had the hat for threepence," and he doubts whether, having given fourpence for it, he will ever get back his money. My good Shadrach, it you go through life passionately deploring the irrevocable, and allow yesterday's transactions to embitter the cheerfulness of to-day and to-morrow—as lief walk down to the Seine, souse in, hats, body, clothes-bag and all, and put an end to your sorrow and sordid cares. Before and since Mr. Franklin wrote his pretty apologue of the Whistle, have we not all made bargains of which we repented, and coveted and acquired objects for which we have paid too dearly? Who has not purchased his hat in some market or other? There is General M'Clellan's cocked-hat for example: I daresay he was eager enough to wear it, and he has learned that it is by no means cheerful wear. There were the military beavers of Messeigneurs of Orleans:[1] they wore them gallantly in the face of battle; but I suspect they were glad enough to pitch them into the James River and come home in mufti. Ah, *mes amis! à chacun son schakot!* I was looking at a bishop the other day, and thinking, "My right reverend lord, that broad

[1] Two cadets of the House of Orleans who served as Volunteers under General M'Clellan in his campaign against Richmond.

brim and rosette must bind your great broad forehead very tightly, and give you many a headache. A good easy wideawake were better for you, and I would like to see that honest face with a cutty pipe in the middle of it." There is my Lord Mayor. My once dear lord, my kind friend, when your two years' reign was over, did not you jump for joy and fling your chapeau-bras out of window: and hasn't *that* hat cost you a pretty bit of money? There, in a splendid travelling chariot, in the sweetest bonnet, all trimmed with orange-blossoms and Chantilly lace, sits my Lady Rosa, with old Lord Snowden by her side. Ah, Rosa! what a price have you paid for that hat which you wear; and is your ladyship's coronet not purchased too dear? Enough of hats. Sir, or Madam, I take off mine, and salute you with profound respect.

DESSEIN'S

I ARRIVED by the night-mail packet from Dover. The passage had been rough, and the usual consequences had ensued. I was disinclined to travel farther that night on my road to Paris, and knew the Calais hotel of old as one of the cleanest, one of the dearest, one of the most comfortable hotels on the continent of Europe. There is no town more French than Calais. That charming old "Hôtel Dessein," with its court, its gardens, its lordly kitchen, its princely waiter—a gentleman of the old school, who has welcomed the finest company in Europe—have long been known to me. I have read complaints in the *Times*, more than once, I think, that the Dessein bills are dear. A bottle of soda-water certainly costs—well, never mind how much. I remember as a boy, at the "Ship" at Dover (imperante Carolo Decimo), when, my place to London being paid, I had but 12*s*. left after a certain little Paris excursion (about which my benighted parents never knew anything), ordering for dinner a whiting, a beef-steak, and a glass

of negus, and the bill was, dinner 7*s.*, glass of negus 2*s.*, waiter 6*d.*, and only half-a-crown left, as I was a sinner, for the guard and coachman on the way to London! And I *was* a sinner. I had gone without leave. What a long, dreary, guilty forty hours journey it was from Paris to Calais, I remember! How did I come to think of this escapade, which occurred in the Easter vacation of the year 1830? I always think of it when I am crossing to Calais. Guilt, sir, guilt remains stamped on the memory, and I feel easier in my mind now that it is liberated of this old peccadillo. I met my college tutor only yesterday. We were travelling, and stopped at the same hotel. He had the very next room to mine. After he had gone into his apartment, having shaken me quite kindly by the hand, I felt inclined to knock at his door and say, "Doctor Bentley, I beg your pardon, but do you remember, when I was going down at the Easter vacation in 1830, you asked me where I was going to spend my vacation? And I said, With my friend Slingsby, in Huntingdonshire. Well, sir, I grieve to have to confess that I told you a fib. I had got £20 and was going for a lark to Paris, where my friend Edwards was staying." There, it is out. The Doctor will read it, for I did not wake him up after all to make my confession, but protest he shall have a copy of this Roundabout sent to him when he returns to his lodge.

They gave me a bed-room there; a very neat room on the first floor, looking into the pretty garden. The hotel must look pretty much as it did a hundred years ago when *he* visited it. I wonder whether he paid his bill? Yes: his journey was just began. He had borrowed or got the money somehow. Such a man would spend it liberally enough when he had it, give generously—nay, drop a tear over the fate of the poor fellow whom he relieved. I don't believe a word he says, but I never accused him of stinginess about money. That is a fault of much more virtuous people than he. Mr. Laurence is ready enough with his purse when there are anybody's guineas in it. Still when I went to bed in the room, in *his* room; when I think how I admire, dislike, and have

abused him, a certain dim feeling of apprehension filled my mind at the midnight hour. What if I should see his lean figure in the black-satin breeches, his sinister smile, his long thin finger pointing to me in the moonlight (for I am in bed, and have popped my candle out), and he should say, "You mistrust me, you hate me, do you? And you, don't you know how Jack, Tom, and Harry, your brother authors hate *you?*" I grin and laugh in the moonlight, in the midnight, in the silence. "O you ghost in black-satin breeches and a wig! I like to be hated by some men," I say. "I know men whose lives are a scheme, whose laughter is a conspiracy, whose smile means something else, whose hatred is a cloak, and I had rather these men should hate me than not."

"My good sir," says he, with a ghastly grin on his lean face, "you have your wish."

"*Après?*" I say. "Please let me go to sleep. I shan't sleep any the worse because——"

"Because there are insects in the bed, and they sting you?" (This is only by way of illustration, my good sir; the animals don't bite me now. All the house at present seems to me excellently clean.) "'Tis absurd to affect this indifference. If you are thin-skinned, and the reptiles bite, they keep you from sleep."

"There are some men who cry out at a flea-bite as loud as if they were torn by a vulture," I growl.

"Men of the *genus irritabile*, my worthy good gentleman!—and you are one."

"Yes, sir, I am of the profession, as you say; and I daresay make a great shouting and crying at a small hurt."

"You are ashamed of that quality by which you earn your subsistence, and such reputation as you have? Your sensibility is your livelihood, my worthy friend. You feel a pang of pleasure or pain? It is noted in your memory, and some day or other makes its appearance in your manuscript. Why, in your last Roundabout rubbish you mention reading your first novel on the day when King George IV was crowned. I remember him in his cradle at St. James's, a lovely little babe; a gilt

Chinese railing was before him, and I dropped the tear of sensibility as I gazed on the sleeping cherub."

"A tear—a fiddlestick, Mr. STERNE," I growled out, for of course I knew my friend in the wig and satin breeches to be no other than the notorious, nay, celebrated Mr. Laurence Sterne.

"Does not the sight of a beautiful infant charm and melt you, *mon ami*? If not, I pity you. Yes, he was beautiful. I was in London the year he was born. I used to breakfast at the 'Mount Coffee-house.' I did not become the fashion until two years later, when my 'Tristram' made his appearance, who has held his own for a hundred years. By the way, *mon bon monsieur*, how many authors of your present time will last till the next century? Do you think Brown will?"

I laughed with scorn as I lay in my bed (and so did the ghost give a ghastly snigger).

"Brown!" I roared. "One of the most over-rated men that ever put pen to paper!"

"What do you think of Jones?"

I grew indignant with this old cynic. "As a reasonable ghost, come out of the other world, you don't mean," I said, "to ask me a serious opinion of Mr. Jones? His books may be very good reading for maid-servants and school-boys, but you don't ask *me* to read them? As a scholar yourself you must know that——"

"Well, then Robinson?"

"Robinson, I am told, has merit. I daresay; I never have been able to read his books, and can't, therefore, form any opinion about Mr. Robinson. At least you will allow that I am not speaking in a prejudiced manner about *him*."

"Ah! I see you men of letters have your cabals and jealousies, as we had in my time. There was an Irish fellow by the name of Gouldsmith, who used to abuse me; but he went into no genteel company—and faith! it mattered little, his praise or abuse. I never was more surprised than when I heard that Mr. Irving, an American gentleman of parts and elegance, had wrote the fellow's life. To make a hero of that man, my dear

sir, 'twas ridiculous! You followed in the fashion, I hear, and chose to lay a wreath before this queer little idol. Preposterous! A pretty writer, who has turned some neat couplets. Bah! I have no patience with Master Posterity, that has chosen to take up this fellow, and make a hero of him! And there was another gentleman of my time, Mr. Thiefcatcher Fielding, forsooth! a fellow with the strength, and the tastes, and the manners of a porter! What madness has possessed you all to bow before that Calvert Butt of a man?—a creature without elegance or sensibility! The dog had spirits, certainly. I remember my Lord Bathurst praising them: but as for reading his books—*ma foi*, I would as lief go and dive for tripe in a cellar. The man's vulgarity stifles me. He wafts me whiffs of gin. Tobacco and onions are in his great coarse laugh, which choke me, *pardi*; and I don't think much better of the other fellow—the Scots' gallipot purveyor—Peregrine Clinker, Humphrey Random—how did the fellow call his rubbish? Neither of these men had the *bel air*, the *bon ton*, the *je ne sçais quoy*. Pah! If I meet them in my walks by our Stygian river, I give them a wide berth, as that hybrid apothecary fellow would say. An ounce of civet, good apothecary; horrible, horrible! The mere thought of the coarseness of those men gives me the *chair de poule*. Mr. Fielding, especially, has no more sensibility than a butcher in Fleet Market. He takes his heroes out of ale-house kitchens, or worse places still. And this is the person whom Posterity has chosen to honour along with me—*me!* Faith, Monsieur Posterity, you have put me in pretty company, and I see you are no wiser than we were in our time. Mr. Fielding, forsooth! Mr. Tripe and Onions! Mr. Cow-heel and Gin! Thank you for nothing, Monsieur Posterity!"

"And so," thought I, "even among these Stygians this envy and quarrelsomeness (if you will permit me the word) survive? What a pitiful meanness! To be sure, I can understand this feeling to a certain extent; a sense of justice will prompt it. In my own case, I often feel myself forced to protest against the absurd praises

lavished on contemporaries. Yesterday, for instance, Lady Jones was good enough to praise one of my works. *Très bien.* But in the very next minute she began, with quite as great enthusiasm, to praise Miss Hobson's last romance. My good creature, what is that woman's praise worth who absolutely admires the writings of Miss Hobson? I offer a friend a bottle of '44 claret, fit for a pontifical supper. 'This is capital wine,' says he; 'and now we have finished the bottle, will you give me a bottle of that ordinaire we drank the other day?' Very well, my good man. You are a good judge—of ordinaire, I daresay. Nothing so provokes my anger, and rouses my sense of justice, as to hear other men undeservedly praised. In a word, if you wish to remain friends with me, don't praise anybody. You tell me that the Venus de' Medici is beautiful, or Jacob Omnium is tall. *Que diable!* Can't I judge for myself? Haven't I eyes and a foot-rule? I don't think the Venus *is* so handsome, since you press me. She is pretty, but she has no expression. And as for Mr. Omnium, I can see much taller men in a fair for twopence."

"And so," I said, turning round to Mr. Sterne, "you are actually jealous of Mr. Fielding? O you men of letters, you men of letters! Is not the world (your world, I mean) big enough for all of you?"

I often travel in my sleep. I often of a night find myself walking in my night-gown about the grey streets. It is awkward at first, but somehow nobody makes any remark. I glide along over the ground with my naked feet. The mud does not wet them. The passers-by do not tread on them. I am wafted over the ground, down the stairs, through the doors. This sort of travelling, dear friends, I am sure you have all of you indulged in.

Well, on the night in question (and, if you wish to know the precise date, it was the 31st of September last), after having some little conversation with Mr. Sterne in our bed-room, I must have got up, though I protest I don't know how, and come downstairs with him into the coffee-room of the "Hôtel Dessein," where the moon was shining, and a cold supper was laid out. I forget

what we had—"vol-au-vent d'œufs de Phénix—agneau aux pistaches à la Barmécide,"—what matters what we had?

"As regards supper this is certain, the less you have of it the better."

That is what one of the guests remarked,—a shabby old man, in a wig, and such a dirty, ragged, disreputable dressing-gown that I should have been quite surprised at him, only one never *is* surprised in dr—— under certain circumstances.

"I can't eat 'em now," said the greasy man (with his false old teeth, I wonder he could eat anything). "I remember Alvanley eating three suppers once at Carlton House—one night *de petite comité*."

"*Petit comité*, sir," said Mr. Sterne.

"Dammy, sir, let me tell my own story my own way. I say, one night at Carlton House, playing at blind hookey with York, Wales, Tom Raikes, Prince Boothby, and Dutch Sam the boxer, Alvanley ate three suppers, and won three and twenty hundred pounds in ponies. Never saw a fellow with such an appetite, except Wales in his *good* time. But he destroyed the finest digestion a man ever had with maraschino, by Jove—always at it."

"Try mine," said Mr. Sterne.

"What a doosid queer box," says Mr. Brummell.

"I had it from a Capuchin friar in this town. The box is but a horn one; but to the nose of sensibility Araby's perfume is not more delicate."

"I call it doosid stale old rappee," says Mr. Brummell —(as for me I declare I could not smell anything at all in either of the boxes). "Old boy in smock-frock, take a pinch?"

The old boy in the smock-frock, as Mr. Brummell called him, was a very old man, with long white beard, wearing, not a smock-frock, but a shirt; and he had actually nothing else save a rope round his neck, which hung behind his chair in the queerest way.

"Fair sir," he said, turning to Mr. Brummell, "when the Prince of Wales and his father laid siege to our town——"

"What nonsense are you talking, old cock?" says Mr. Brummell; "Wales was never here. His late Majesty George IV passed through on his way to Hanover. My good man, you don't seem to know what's up at all. What is he talkin' about the siege of Calais? I lived here fifteen years! Ought to know. What's his old name?"

"I am Master Eustace of Saint Peter's," said the old gentleman in the shirt. "When my Lord King Edward laid siege to this city——"

"Laid siege to Jericho!" cries Mr. Brummell. "The old man is cracked—cracked, sir!"

"—— Laid siege to this city," continued the old man, "I and five more promised Messire Gautier de Mauny that we would give ourselves up as ransom for the place. And we came before our Lord King Edward, attired as you see, and the fair queen begged our lives out of her gramercy."

"Queen, nonsense! you mean the Princess of Wales —pretty woman, *petit nez retroussé*, grew monstrous stout?" suggested Mr. Brummell, whose reading was evidently not extensive. "Sir Sidney Smith was a fine fellow, great talker, hook nose, so has Lord Cochrane, so has Lord Wellington. She was very sweet on Sir Sidney."

"Your acquaintance with the history of Calais does not seem to be considerable," said Mr. Sterne to Mr. Brummell, with a shrug.

"Don't it, bishop?—for I conclude you are a bishop by your wig. I know Calais as well as any man. I lived here for years before I took that confounded consulate at Caen. Lived in this hotel, then at Leleux's. People used to stop here. Good fellows used to ask for poor George Brummell; Hertford did, so did the Duchess of Devonshire. Not know Calais indeed! That is a good joke. Had many a good dinner here: sorry I ever left it."

"My Lord King Edward," chirped the queer old gentleman in the shirt, "colonized the place with his English, after we had yielded it up to him. I have heard tell they kept it for nigh three hundred years, till my Lord de Guise took it from a fair Queen, Mary of blessed

memory, a holy woman. Eh, but Sire Gautier of Mauny was a good knight, a valiant captain, gentle and courteous withal! Do you remember his ransoming the——?"

"What is the old fellow twaddlin' about?" cries Brummell. "He is talking about some knight?—I never spoke to a knight, and very seldom to a baronet. Firkins, my butterman, was a knight—a knight and alderman. Wales knighted him once on going into the City."

"I am not surprised that the gentleman should not understand Messire Eustace of St. Peter's," said the ghostly individual addressed as Mr. Sterne. "Your reading doubtless has not been very extensive?"

"Dammy, sir, speak for yourself!" cries Mr. Brummell, testily. "I never professed to be a reading man, but I was as good as my neighbours. Wales wasn't a reading man; York wasn't a reading man; Clarence wasn't a reading man; Sussex was, but he wasn't a man in society. I remember reading your 'Sentimental Journey,' old boy: read it to the Duchess at Beauvoir, I recollect, and she cried over it. Doosid clever amusing book, and does you great credit. Birron wrote doosid clever books, too; so did Monk Lewis. George Spencer was an elegant poet, and my dear Duchess of Devonshire, if she had not been a grande dame, would have beat 'em all, by George. Wales couldn't write: he could sing, but he couldn't spell."

"Ah, you know the great world? so did I in my time, Mr. Brummell. I have had the visiting tickets of half the nobility at my lodgings in Bond Street. But they left me there no more cared for than last year's calendar," sighed Mr. Sterne. "I wonder who is the mode in London now? One of our late arrivals, my Lord Macaulay, has prodigious merit and learning, and faith, his histories are more amusing than any novels, my own included."

"Don't know, I'm sure; not in my line. Pick this bone of chicken," says Mr. Brummell, trifling with a skeleton bird before him.

"I remember in this city of Calais worse fare than yon bird," said old Mr. Eustace of Saint Peter's,

"Marry, sirs, when my Lord King Edward laid siege to us, lucky was he who could get a slice of horse for his breakfast, and a rat was sold at the price of a hare."

"Hare is coarse food, never tasted rat," remarked the Beau. "Table-d'hôte poor fare enough for a man like me, who has been accustomed to the best of cookery. But rat—stifle me! I couldn't swallow that: never could bear hardship at all."

"We had to bear enough when my Lord of England pressed us. 'Twas pitiful to see the faces of our women as the siege went on, and hear the little ones asking for dinner."

"Always a bore, children. At dessert, they are bad enough, but at dinner they're the deuce and all," remarked Mr. Brummell.

Messire Eustace of St. Peter's did not seem to pay much attention to the Beau's remarks, but continued his own train of thought as old men will do.

"I hear," said he, "that there has actually been no war between us of France and you men of England for well nigh fifty year. Ours has ever been a nation of warriors. And besides her regular found men-at-arms, 'tis said the English of the present time have more than a hundred thousand of archers with weapons that will carry for half a mile. And a multitude have come amongst us of late from a great Western country, never so much as heard of in my time—valiant men and great drawers of the long-bow, and they say they have ships in armour that no shot can penetrate. Is it so? Wonderful; wonderful! The best armour, gossips, is a stout heart."

"And if ever manly heart beat under shirt-frill, thine is that heart, Sir Eustace!" cried Mr. Sterne, enthusiastically.

"We, of France, were never accused of lack of courage, sir, in so far as I know," said Messire Eustace. "We have shown as much in a thousand wars with you English by sea and land; and sometimes we conquered, and sometimes, as is the fortune of war, we were discomfited. And notably in a great sea-fight which befell

of Ushant on the first of June —— our Amiral, Messire Villaret de Joyeuse, on board his galleon named the 'Vengeur,' being sore pressed by an English bombard, rather than yield the crew of his ship to mercy, determined to go down with all on board of her: and to the cry of Vive la Répub——or, I would say, of Notre Dame à la Rescousse, he and his crew all sank to an immortal grave——"

"Sir," said I, looking with amazement at the old gentleman, "surely, surely, there is some mistake in your statement. Permit me to observe that the action of the first of June took place five hundred years after your time, and——"

"Perhaps I am confusing my dates," said the old gentleman, with a faint blush. "You say I am mixing up the transactions of my time on earth with the story of my successors? It may be so. We take no count of a few centuries more or less in our dwelling by the darkling Stygian river. Of late, there came amongst us a good knight, Messire de Cambronne, who fought against you English in the country of Flanders, being captain of the guard of my Lord the King of France, in a famous battle where you English would have been utterly routed but for the succour of the Prussian heathen. This Messire de Cambronne, when bidden to yield by you of England, answered this, 'The Guard dies but never surrenders;' and fought a long time afterwards, as became a good knight. In our wars with you of England it may have pleased the Fates to give you the greater success, but on our side, also, there has been no lack of brave deeds performed by brave men."

"King Edward may have been the victor, sir, as being the strongest, but you are the hero of the siege of Calais!" cried Mr. Sterne. "Your story is sacred, and your name has been blessed for five hundred years. Wherever men speak of patriotism and sacrifice, Eustace of Saint Pierre shall be beloved and remembered. I prostrate myself before the bare feet which stood before King Edward. What collar of chivalry is to be compared to that glorious order which you wear? Think,

sir, how out of the myriad millions of our race, you, and some few more, stand forth as exemplars of duty and honour. *Fortunati nimium!*"

"Sir," said the old gentleman, "I did but my duty at a painful moment; and 'tis matter of wonder to me that men talk still, and glorify such a trifling matter. By Our Lady's grace, in the fair kingdom of France, there are scores of thousands of men, gentle and simple, who would do as I did. Does not every sentinel at his post, does not every archer in the front of battle, brave it, and die where his captain bids him? Who am I that I should be chosen out of all France to be an example of fortitude? I braved no tortures, though these I trust I would have endured with a good heart. I was subject to threats only. Who was the Roman knight of whom the Latin clerk Horatius tells?"

"A Latin clerk? Faith, I forget my Latin," says Mr. Brummell. "Ask the parson here."

"Messire Regulus, I remember, was his name. Taken prisoner by the Saracens, he gave his knightly word, and was permitted to go seek a ransom among his own people. Being unable to raise the sum that was a fitting ransom for such a knight, he returned to Afric, and cheerfully submitted to the tortures which the Paynims inflicted. And 'tis said he took leave of his friends as gaily as though he were going to a village kermes, or riding to his garden house in the suburb of the city."

"Great, good, glorious man!" cried Mr. Sterne, very much moved. "Let me embrace that gallant hand, and bedew it with my tears! As long as honour lasts thy name shall be remembered. See this dew-drop twinkling on my cheek? 'Tis the sparkling tribute that Sensibility pays to Valour. Though in my life and practice I may turn from Virtue, believe me, I never have ceased to honour her! Ah, Virtue! Ah, Sensibility! Oh——"

Here Mr. Sterne was interrupted by a monk of the Order of St. Francis, who stepped into the room, and begged us all to take a pinch of his famous old rappee. I suppose the snuff was very pungent, for, with a great start, I woke up; and now perceived that I must have

been dreaming altogether. "Dessein's" of nowadays is not the "Dessein's" which Mr. Sterne, and Mr. Brummell, and I recollect in the good old times. The town of Calais has bought the old hotel, and "Dessein" has gone over to "Quillacq's." And I was there yesterday. And I remember old diligences, and old postillions in pig-tails and jack-boots, who were once as alive as I am, and whose cracking whips I have heard in the midnight many and many a time. Now, where are they? Behold, they have been ferried over Styx, and have passed away into limbo.

I wonder what time does my boat go? Ah! Here comes the waiter bringing me my little bill.

POEMS

[The present editor would be inclined to give considerable space to the lyrics of Thackeray; not because they are better than his novels or essays, but because they can be so much better represented here. No scene from any story can even approximately suggest the strength and growth of that story; and even such a series as that of the "Roundabout Papers" has a conversational continuity that is spoilt by selection. But a lyric is essentially a lonely thing. The smallest song is big enough to fill the universe. And Thackeray, though garrulous here as everywhere else, had a true and noble lyric instinct. He was an echo of Horace, but a genuine echo. He was Horatian in his feeling that the weightiest lessons of time ought to be expressed the most lightly. This selection is slender through practical necessity, but I have begun with one of the kindliest of his songs of memory and emotion, and I have ended upon the note on which he always wished to end.]

THE CANE-BOTTOM'D CHAIR

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs.

To mount to this realm is a toil, to be sure,
But the fire there is bright and the air rather pure;
And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
Is grand through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is cramm'd in all nooks
With worthless old knicknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
Crack'd bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from friends.

Old armour, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all crack'd),
Old rickety tables, and chairs broken-backed;
A twopenny treasury, wondrous to see;
What matter? 'tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

No better divan need the Sultan require,
Than the creaking old sofa that basks by the fire;
And 'tis wonderful, surely, what music you get
From the rickety, ramshackle, wheezy spinet.

That praying-rug came from a Turcoman's camp;
By Tiber once twinkled that brazen old lamp;
A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn:
'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon.

Long, long through the hours, and the night, and the chimes,
Here we talk of old books, and old friends, and old times;
As we sit in a fog made of rich Latakie
This chamber is pleasant to you, friend, and me.

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There 's one that I love and I cherish the best:
For the finest of couches that 's padded with hair
I never would change thee, my cane-bottom'd chair.

'Tis a bandy-legg'd, high-shoulder'd, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottom'd chair.

If chairs have but feeling, in holding such charms,
A thrill must have pass'd through your wither'd old arms!
I look'd, and I long'd, and I wish'd in despair;
I wish'd myself turn'd to a cane-bottom'd chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face!
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
And she sat there, and bloom'd in my cane-bottom'd chair.

And so I have valued my chair ever since,
Like the shrine of a saint, or the throne of a prince;
Saint Fanny, my patroness sweet I declare,
The queen of my heart and my cane-bottom'd chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company 's gone
In the silence of night as I sit here alone—
I sit here alone, but we yet are a pair—
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottom'd chair.

She comes from the past and revisits my room;
She looks as she then did, all beauty and bloom;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottom'd chair.

SORROWS OF WERTHER

WERTHER had a love for Charlotte
  Such as words could never utter;
Would you know how first he met her?
  She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
  And a moral man was Werther,
And, for all the wealth of Indies,
  Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sighed and pined and ogled,
  And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
  And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
  Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person,
  Went on cutting bread and butter.

THE WHITE SQUALL

On deck, beneath the awning,
I dozing lay and yawning;
It was the gray of dawning,
  Ere yet the sun arose;
And above the funnel's roaring,
And the fitful wind's deploring,
I heard the cabin snoring
  With universal nose.
I could hear the passengers snorting—
I envied their disporting—
Vainly I was courting
  The pleasure of a doze!

So I lay, and wondered why light
Came not, and watched the twilight,
And the glimmer of the skylight,
  That shot across the deck;
And the binnacle pale and steady,
And the dull glimpse of the dead-eye,
And the sparks in fiery eddy
  That whirled from the chimney neck.
In our jovial floating prison
There was sleep from fore to mizen,
And never a star had risen
  The hazy sky to speck.

Strange company we harboured;
We'd a hundred Jews to larboard,
Unwashed, uncombed, unbarbered—
  Jews black, and brown, and gray;
With terror it would seize ye,
And make your souls uneasy,
To see those Rabbis greasy,
  Who did nought but scratch and pray:
Their dirty children puking—
Their dirty saucepans cooking—

Their dirty fingers hooking
Their swarming fleas away.

To starboard, Turks and Greeks were—
Whiskered and brown their cheeks were—
Enormous wide their breeks were,
Their pipes did puff alway;
Each on his mat allotted
In silence smoked and squatted,
Whilst round their children trotted
In pretty, pleasant play.
He can't but smile who traces
The smiles on those brown faces,
And the pretty prattling graces
Of those small heathens gay.

And so the hours kept tolling,
And through the ocean rolling
Went the brave "Iberia" bowling
Before the break of day——

When a SQUALL, upon a sudden,
Came o'er the waters scudding;
And the clouds began to gather,
And the sea was lashed to lather,
And the lowering thunder grumbled,
And the lightning jumped and tumbled,
And the ship, and all the ocean,
Woke up in wild commotion.
Then the wind set up a howling,
And the poodle dog a yowling,
And the cocks began a crowing,
And the old cow raised a lowing
As she heard the tempest blowing;
And fowls and geese did cackle,
And the cordage and the tackle
Began to shriek and crackle:
And the spray dashed o'er the funnels,
And down the deck in runnels;
And the rushing water soaks all,
From the seamen in the fo'ksal

To the stokers whose black faces
Peer out of their bed-places;
And the captain he was bawling,
And the sailors pulling, hauling,
And the quarter-deck tarpauling
Was shivered in the squalling;
And the passengers awaken,
Most pitifully shaken;
And the steward jumps up, and hastens
For the necessary basins.

Then the Greeks they groaned and quivered,
And they knelt, and moaned, and shivered,
As the plunging waters met them,
And splashed and overset them;
And they call in their emergence
Upon countless saints and virgins;
And their marrowbones are bended,
And they think the world is ended.

And the Turkish women for'ard
Were frightened and behorror'd;
And shrieking and bewildering,
The mothers clutched their children;
The men sung "Allah! Illah!
Mashallah Bismillah!"
As the warring waters doused them
And splashed them and soused them,
And they called upon the Prophet,
And thought but little of it.

Then all the fleas in Jewry
Jumped up and bit like fury;
And the progeny of Jacob
Did on the main-deck wake up
(I wot those greasy Rabbins
Would never pay for cabins);
And each man moaned and jabbered in
His filthy Jewish gaberdine,
In woe and lamentation,
And howling consternation.

And the splashing water drenches
Their dirty brats and wenches;
And they crawl from bales and benches
In a hundred thousand stenches.

This was the White Squall famous,
Which latterly o'ercame us,
And which all will well remember
On the 28th September;
When a Prussian captain of Lancers
(Those tight-laced, whiskered prancers)
Came on the deck astonished,
By that wild squall admonished,
And wondering cried, "Potztausend,
Wie ist der Sturm jetzt brausend!"
And looked at Captain Lewis,
Who calmly stood and blew his
Cigar in all the bustle,
And scorned the tempest's tussle.
And oft we've thought thereafter
How he beat the storm to laughter:
For well he knew his vessel
With that vain wind could wrestle;
And when a wreck we thought her,
And doomed ourselves to slaughter,
How gaily he fought her,
And through the hubbub brought her,
And as the tempest caught her,
Cried, "GEORGE! SOME BRANDY-AND-WATER!"

And when, its force expended,
The harmless storm was ended,
And as the sunrise splendid
  Came blushing o'er the sea,
I thought, as day was breaking,
My little girls were waking,
And smiling, and making
  A prayer at home for me.

1844.

THE BALLAD OF BOUILLABAISSE

A STREET there is in Paris famous,
For which no rhyme our language yields,
Rue Neuve des Petits Champs its name is—
The New Street of the Little Fields.
And here's an inn, not rich and splendid,
But still in comfortable case;
The which in youth I oft attended,
To eat a bowl of Bouillabaisse.

This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is—
A sort of soup or broth or brew,
Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,
That Greenwich never could outdo;
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffron,
Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace:
All these you eat at TERRÉ'S tavern,
In that one dish of Bouillabaisse.

Indeed a rich and savoury stew 'tis;
And true philosophers, methinks,
Who love all sorts of natural beauties,
Should love good victuals and good drinks.
And Cordelier or Benedictine
Might gladly, sure, his lot embrace,
Nor find a fast-day too afflicting,
Which served him up a Bouillabaisse.

I wonder if the house still there is?
Yes, here the lamp is, as before;
The smiling red-cheeked *écaillère* is
Still opening oysters at the door.
Is TERRÉ still alive and able?
I recollect his droll grimace:
He'd come and smile before your table,
And hope you liked your Bouillabaisse.

We enter—nothing's changed or older.
"How's Monsieur TERRÉ, waiter, pray?"
The waiter stares and shrugs his shoulder—
"Monsieur is dead this many a day."
"It is the lot of saint and sinner,
So honest TERRÉ's run his race."
"What will Monsieur require for dinner?"
"Say, do you still cook Bouillabaisse?"

"Oh, oui, Monsieur," 's the waiter's answer;
"Quel vin Monsieur désire-t-il?"
"Tell me a good one."—"That I can, Sir:
The Chambertin with yellow seal."
"So TERRÉ's gone," I say, and sink in
My old accustom'd corner-place;
"He's done with feasting and with drinking,
With Burgundy and Bouillabaisse."

My old accustom'd corner here is,
The table still is in the nook;
Ah! vanish'd many a busy year is
This well-known chair since last I took.
When first I saw ye, *cari luoghi*,
I'd scarce a beard upon my face,
And now a grizzled, grim old fogy,
I sit and wait for Bouillabaisse.

Where are you, old companions trusty
Of early days here met to dine?
Come, waiter! quick, a flagon crusty—
I'll pledge them in the good old wine.
The kind old voices and old faces
My memory can quick retrace;
Around the board they take their places,
And share the wine and Bouillabaisse.

There's JACK has made a wondrous marriage;
There's laughing TOM is laughing yet;
There's brave AUGUSTUS drives his carriage;
There's poor old FRED in the *Gazette;*

On James's head the grass is growing:
  Good Lord! the world has wagged apace
Since here we set the claret flowing,
  And drank, and ate the Bouillabaisse.

Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!
  I mind me of a time that's gone,
When here I'd sit, as now I'm sitting,
  In this same place—but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me,
  A dear, dear face looked fondly up,
And sweetly spoke and smiled to cheer me
  —There's no one now to share my cup.

* * * * *

I drink it as the Fates ordain it.
  Come, fill it, and have done with rhymes:
Fill up the lonely glass and drain it
  In memory of dear old times.
Welcome the wine, whate'er the seal is;
  And sit you down and say your grace
With thankful heart, whate'er the meal is,
  —Here comes the smoking Bouillabaisse!

AT THE CHURCH GATE

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
    Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate
With longing eyes I wait,
    Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
    And noise and humming:

They've hush'd the Minster bell:
The organ 'gins to swell:
She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast:
She comes—she's here—she's past—
May Heaven go with her!

Kneel, undisturb'd, fair Saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute
Like outcast spirits who wait
And see through heaven's gate
Angels within it.

THE AGE OF WISDOM

Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billing and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window panes,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
  Grizzling hair the brain doth clear—
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
  Once you have come to Forty Year.

Pledge me round, I bid ye declare,
  All good fellows whose beards are gray,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
  Ever a month was pass'd away?

The reddest lips that ever have kissed,
  The brightest eyes that ever have shone,
May pray and whisper, and we not list,
Or look away, and never be missed,
  Ere yet ever a month is gone.

Gillian's dead, God rest her bier,
  How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian's married, but I sit here
Alone and merry at Forty Year,
  Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine.

VANITAS VANITATUM

How spoke of old the Royal Seer?
  (His text is one I love to treat on.)
This life of ours he said is sheer
  Mataiotes Mataioteton.

O student of this gilded Book,
  Declare, while musing on its pages,
If truer words were ever spoke
  By ancient, or by modern sages?

The various authors' names but note,[1]
French, Spanish, English, Russians, Germans:
And in the volume polyglot,
Sure you may read a hundred sermons!

What histories of life are here,
More wild than all romancers' stories;
What wondrous transformations queer,
What homilies on human glories!

What theme for sorrow or for scorn!
What chronicle of Fates' surprises—
Of adverse fortune nobly borne,
Of chances, changes, ruins, rises!

Of thrones upset, and sceptres broke,
How strange a record here is written!
Of honours, dealt as if in joke;
Of brave desert unkindly smitten.

How low men were, and how they rise!
How high they were, and how they tumble!
O vanity of vanities!
O laughable, pathetic jumble!

Here between honest Janin's joke
And his Turk Excellency's firman,
I write my name upon the book:
I write my name—and end my sermon.

O Vanity of vanities!
How wayward the decrees of Fate are;
How very weak the very wise,
How very small the very great are!

[1] Between a page by Jules Janin, and a poem by the Turkish Ambassador, in Madame de R——'s album, containing the autographs of kings, princes, poets, marshals, musicians, diplomatists, statesmen, artists, and men of letters of all nations.

What mean these stale moralities,
Sir Preacher, from your desk you mumble?
Why rail against the great and wise,
And tire us with your ceaseless grumble?

Pray choose us out another text,
O man morose and narrow-minded!
Come turn the page—I read the next,
And then the next, and still I find it.

Read here how Wealth aside was thrust,
And Folly set in place exalted;
How Princes footed in the dust,
While lacqueys in the saddle vaulted.

Though thrice a thousand years are past,
Since David's son, the sad and splendid,
The weary King Ecclesiast,
Upon his awful tablets penned it,—

Methinks the text is never stale,
And life is every day renewing
Fresh comments on the old, old tale
Of Folly, Fortune, Glory, Ruin.

Hark to the Preacher, preaching still
He lifts his voice and cries his sermon,
Here at St. Peter's of Cornhill,
As yonder on the Mount of Hermon:

For you and me to heart to take
(O dear beloved brother readers)
To-day as when the good King spake
Beneath the solemn Syrian cedars.

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